

# S2E5

Saturday, May 29, 2021 5:55 PM

Topic: Illuminati

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  - To oppose superstition, obscurantism, religious influence over public life, and abuses of state power. "to put an end to the machinations of the purveyors of injustice, to control them without dominating them."
- Conspiracies
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  - Conspiracies

Timeline

- 1776 Founded by Adam Weishaupt
- 1779 AW joins Freemasons and sets up lodge *Theodore of the Good Council*,
- 1780 recruits Adolph Knigge, Illuminati starts to fracture.
- 1782 recruits swell, Lodge separated from "official" freemasonry
- 1784 Recruits swell again due to liberalism in Bravia, Knigge leaves due to infighting
- 1785 Secret societies banned, end of the Illuminati?

## Illuminati

Friday, February 12, 2021 12:40 PM

The Illuminati<sup>44</sup> (plural of [Latin](#) *illuminatus*, 'enlightened') is a name given to several groups, both real and fictitious. Historically, the name usually refers to the [Bavarian Illuminati](#), an Enlightenment-era [secret society](#) founded on 1 May 1776 in [Bavaria](#), today part of [Germany](#). The society's goals were to oppose [superstition](#), [obscurantism](#), religious influence over public life, and abuses of [state power](#). "The order of the day," they wrote in their general statutes, "is to put an end to the machinations of the purveyors of injustice, to control them without dominating them."<sup>45</sup> The Illuminati—along with [Freemasonry](#) and other secret societies—were outlawed through [edit](#) by [Charles Theodore, Elector of Bavaria](#), with the encouragement of the [Catholic Church](#), in 1784, 1785, 1787, and 1790.<sup>46</sup> During subsequent years, the group was generally vilified by conservative and religious critics who claimed that the Illuminati continued underground and were responsible for the [French Revolution](#). Many influential intellectuals and progressive politicians counted themselves as members, including [Ferdinand of Brunswick](#) and the diplomat [Franz Xaver von Zach](#), who was the Order's second-in-command.<sup>47</sup> It attracted literary men such as [Johann Wolfgang von Goethe](#) and [Johann Gottfried Herder](#) and the reigning [Duke of Gotha](#) and [of Weimar](#).<sup>48</sup> In subsequent use, "Illuminati" has referred to various organisations which have claimed, or have been claimed to be, connected to the original Bavarian Illuminati or similar secret societies, though these links have been unsubstantiated. These organisations have often been alleged to conspire to control world affairs, by masterminding events and planting agents in [government](#) and [corporations](#), in order to gain [political power](#) and influence and to establish a [New World Order](#). Central to some of the more widely known and elaborate [conspiracy theories](#), the Illuminati have been depicted as lurking in the shadows and pulling the strings and levers of power in dozens of novels, films, television shows, comics, video games, and music videos.

### Origins



*Hic sis est Phoenix, eorum resurgens potens;  
Quem & non temere magis temere exstinguit.  
Ovid. Met. 8.*

*True and vermechete Ausgabe.*

*Reprint und Leipzig,  
in der Gesamtausgabe des Buchdruckers. 1798.*

The *Owl of Minerva* perched on a book was an emblem used by the Bavarian Illuminati in their "Minerval" degree.

**Adam Weishaupt** (1748–1830) became professor of [Canon Law](#) and [practical philosophy](#) at the [University of Ingolstadt](#) in 1773. He was the only non-clerical professor at an institution run by [Jesuits](#), whose order Pope [Clement XIV](#) had dissolved in 1773. The Jesuits of Ingolstadt, however, still retained the purse strings and some power at the university, which they continued to regard as their own. They made constant attempts to frustrate and discredit non-clerical staff, especially when course material contained anything they regarded as liberal or Protestant. Weishaupt became deeply [anti-clerical](#), resolving to spread the ideals of the [Enlightenment](#) (*Aufklärung*) through some sort of secret society of like-minded individuals.<sup>49</sup>

Finding [Freemasonry](#) expensive, and not open to his ideas, he founded his own society which was to have a system of ranks or grades based on those in Freemasonry, but with his own agenda.<sup>50</sup> His original name for the new order was *Band der Perfektibilisten*, or Covenant of Perfection (Perfectibilists); he later changed it because it sounded too strange.<sup>51</sup> On 1 May 1776, Weishaupt and four students formed the Perfectibilists, taking the *Owl of Minerva* as their symbol.<sup>52</sup> The members were to use aliases within the society. Weishaupt became *Spartacus*. Law students Massenhausen, Bauhof, Merz and Sutor became respectively *Ajax*, *Agathon*, *Tiberius* and *Erasmus Roterdamus*. Weishaupt later expelled Sutor for indecence.<sup>53</sup> In April 1778, the order became the  *Illuminatenorden*, or Order of Illuminati, after Weishaupt had seriously contemplated the name *Beer order*.<sup>54</sup>

Massenhausen proved initially the most active in expanding the society. Significantly, while studying in Munich shortly after the formation of the order, he recruited [Xavier von Zwack](#), a former pupil of Weishaupt at the beginning of a significant administrative career. (At the time, he was in charge of the [Bavarian National Lottery](#).) Massenhausen's enthusiasm soon became a liability in the eyes of Weishaupt, often resulting in attempts to recruit unsuitable candidates. Later, his erratic love-life made him neglectful, and as Weishaupt passed control of the Munich group to Zwack, it became clear that Massenhausen had misappropriated subscriptions and intercepted correspondence between Weishaupt and Zwack. In 1778, Massenhausen graduated and took a post outside [Bavaria](#), taking no further interest in the order. At this time, the order had a nominal membership of twelve.<sup>55</sup>

With the departure of Massenhausen, Zwack immediately applied himself to recruiting more mature and important recruits. Most prized by Weishaupt was Hertel, a childhood friend and a canon of the [Munich Frauenkirche](#). By the end of summer 1778 the order had 27 members (still counting Massenhausen) in 5 commands: Munich (Athens), Ingolstadt (Eleusis), Ravensberg (Sparta), Freisingen (Thebes), and Eichstaedt (Erzurum).<sup>56</sup> During this early period, the order had three grades of Novice, Minerval, and Illuminated Minerval, of which only the Minerval grade involved a complicated ceremony. In this the candidate was given secret signs and a password. A system of mutual espionage kept Weishaupt informed of the activities and character of all his members, his favourites becoming members of the ruling council, or Areopagus. Some novices were permitted to recruit, becoming *Insinuants*. Christians of good character were actively sought, with Jews and pagans specifically excluded, along with women, monks, and members of other secret societies. Favoured candidates were rich, docile, willing to learn, and aged 18–30.<sup>57</sup>

**Transition**  
Having, with difficulty, dissuaded some of his members from joining the Freemasons, Weishaupt decided to join the older order to acquire material to expand his own ritual. He was admitted to lodge "Prudence" of the [Rite of Strict Observance](#) early in February 1777. His progress through the three degrees of "blue lodge" masonry taught him nothing of the higher degrees he sought to exploit, but in the following year a priest called Abbé Marotti informed Zwack that these inner secrets rested on knowledge of the older religion and the primitive church. Zwack persuaded Weishaupt that their own order should enter into friendly relations with Freemasonry, and obtain the dispensation to set up their own lodge. At this stage (December 1778), the addition of the first three degrees of Freemasonry was seen as a secondary project.<sup>58</sup>

With little difficulty, a warrant was obtained from the [Grand Lodge of Prussia](#) called the [Royal York for Friendship](#), and the new lodge was called [Theodore of the Good Council](#), with the intention of flattering [Charles Theodore, Elector of Bavaria](#). It was founded in Munich on 21 March 1779, and quickly packed with Illuminati. The first master, a man called Radl, was persuaded to return home to Baden, and by July Weishaupt's order ran the lodge.<sup>59</sup>

The next step involved independence from their Grand Lodge. By establishing masonic relations with the [Union](#) lodge in Frankfurt, affiliated to the [Premier Grand Lodge of England](#), Lodge Theodore became independently recognised, and able to declare its independence. As a new master lodge, it could now spawn lodges of its own. The recruiting drive amongst the Frankfurt masons also obtained the allegiance of [Adolph Freiherr Knigge](#).<sup>60</sup>

### Reform

#### Adolph Knigge



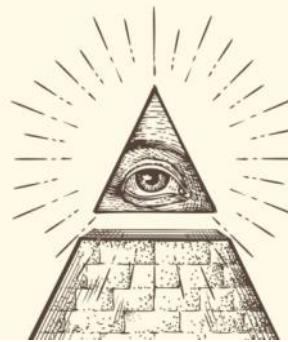
Adolph Freiherr Knigge, the most effective recruiter for the Illuminati

Knigge was recruited late in 1780 at a convention of the [Rite of Strict Observance](#) by Costanzo Marchese di Costanzo, an infantry captain in the Bavarian army and a fellow Freemason. Knigge, still in his twenties, had already reached the highest initiatory grades of his order, and had arrived with his own grand plans for its reform. Disappointed that his scheme found no support, Knigge was immediately intrigued when Costanzo informed him that the order that he sought to create already existed. Knigge and three of his friends expressed a strong interest in learning more of this order, and Costanzo showed them material relating to the Minerval grade. The teaching material for the grade was "liberal" literature which was banned in Bavaria, but common knowledge in the Protestant German states. Knigge's three companions became disillusioned and had no more to do with Costanzo, but Knigge's persistence was rewarded in November 1780 by a letter from Weishaupt. Knigge's connections, both within and outside of Freemasonry, made him an ideal recruit. Knigge, for his own part, was flattered by the attention, and drawn towards the order's stated aims of education and the protection of mankind from despotism. Weishaupt managed to acknowledge, and pledge to support, Knigge's interest in alchemy and the "higher sciences". Knigge replied to Weishaupt outlining his plans for the reform of Freemasonry as the Strict Observance began to question its own origins.<sup>61</sup>

## A Brief History of the Illuminati

5 min read

By Gaia Staff |  
May 24, 2017 |



### Origin of the Illuminati

When the [word Illuminati is mentioned](#), there are several things that immediately come to mind: Bilderberg, New World Order, [the Cabal](#), celebrities and politicians to name a few. But, whether or not the Illuminati is a covert organization of reptilians with an esoteric agenda for global domination via subliminal enslavement, or a secret club of elites who throw strange occult parties, it does have a traceable origin similar in nature to the Freemasons.

The Illuminati date back to the mid-1700s, founded by a Bavarian professor at the [University of Ingolstadt](#) named [Adam Weishaupt](#). Weishaupt was a law professor, followed by an even higher honor of Professor of Natural and Canon Law. Unfortunately, he butted heads with the Jesuit priests of the University. Weishaupt's world-views were more cosmopolitan and liberal than the bucolic, dogmatic views of the priesthood. In response, he created the Illuminati, a secret society eponymously promoting enlightenment as well as moral progress. The priesthood, waging significant political power in those days, revoked his academic credentials and had him banished from the country. He moved on to Germany where he was better received and free to form the foundation of the Illuminati and its philosophy.

The [mission statement](#) of Weishaupt's Illuminati was, "by the mutual assistance of its members, to attain the highest possible degree of morality and virtue, and to lay the foundation for the reformation of the world by the association of good men to oppose the progress of moral evil."<sup>62</sup>

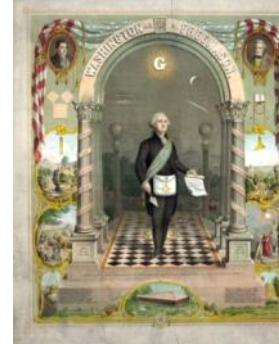
While his ambitions were ostensibly noble, Weishaupt intended to change the way European nations were run, by subversive means. Acceptance requirements to become a member of the Illuminati consisted primarily of wealth, societal influence and political pull. Members of the society consisted of bankers, politicians, doctors and those of general upper-class importance. Thus, planting the seeds for the modern conception or iteration of the Illuminati. One of the original member's name that is still highly recognized and associated today with the Illuminati was Mayer Amschel Rothschild.

### The Founding Father

The Illuminati was founded by Weishaupt in the year 1776, an obviously significant year in American history. It is pretty commonly known that many of the founding fathers were members of the freemasons.

George Washington, Benjamin Franklin and John Hancock were notable masons, and the influence of their membership can be seen in the philosophies they imbued in the Constitution [as well as symbolism in our currency](#).

The basic explanation is that they were simply freemasons who kept their philosophies secret because it clashed with church doctrine, but some believe it to be deeper and linked to the Illuminati. The use of the symbolism of the all-seeing eye above a pyramid on the dollar bill is often taken to mean "the Announcement of a New World Order."



### Conspiracy Theories

The Illuminati has become a household term now with its popularization in media and pop culture. Conspiracies range as to the extent of the power of the Illuminati, but most maintain that the group is made up of high-brow politicians, bankers, business moguls and celebrities. On the extreme end of the spectrum, these members are thought to be an [alien reptilian species controlling humanity](#).

The most notorious of the clandestine groups associated with the Illuminati is the Bilderberg Group. The Bilderbergers hold an annual meeting, which is no secret and is ostensibly held to discuss issues pertaining to European and North American relations.

The [Bilderberg website](#) states that the meeting is an amalgam of leaders and experts from politics, media and business who are invited to discuss megatrends and major issues facing the world. What makes the meetings mysterious and has led to conspiracies surrounding it, is that they are held under the "Chatham Rule," meaning the identities of all attendees are kept secret.

Conspiracies surrounding the plans hashed out at Bilderberg meetings concern the plotting of a New World Order through methods ranging from population control, to the spread of pandemics, to Chemtrails, geo-engineering, and a [secret space program](#).

Other tactics thought to be discussed at these meetings include bribery and compromising of politicians through various means. A major point of contention, for American citizens that are potentially involved in these meetings, is that they are breaking the law through the Logan Act, which prohibits unauthorized citizens from negotiating with foreign governments that have disputes with the U.S.

Whether the Illuminati is real or still active is up for debate, but the clandestine Bilderberg meetings will undoubtedly continue to fuel conspiracies. Are they plotting diabolical schemes? And if there's nothing to hide why is their membership kept so secret?

From <<https://www.gaia.com/article/what-is-the-illuminati>>

A history of why you shouldn't be worried

knowledge in the Protestant German states. Knigge's three companions became disillusioned and had no more to do with Costanzo, but Knigge's persistence was rewarded in November 1780 by a letter from Weishaupt. Knigge's connections, both within and outside of Freemasonry, made him an ideal recruit. Knigge, for his own part, was flattered by the attention, and drawn towards the order's stated aims of education and the protection of mankind from despotism. Weishaupt managed to acknowledge, and pledge to support, Knigge's interest in alchemy and the "higher sciences". Knigge replied to Weishaupt outlining his plans for the reform of Freemasonry as the Strict Observance began to question its own origins.<sup>44</sup>

Weishaupt set Knigge the task of recruiting before he could be admitted to the higher grades of the order. Knigge accepted, on the condition that he be allowed to choose his own recruiting grounds. Many other masons found Knigge's description of the new masonic order attractive, and were enrolled in the Minerval grade of the Illuminati. Knigge appeared at this time to believe in the "Most Serene Superioris" which Weishaupt claimed to serve. His inability to articulate anything about the higher degrees of the order became increasingly embarrassing, but in delaying any help, Weishaupt gave him an extra task. Provided with material by Weishaupt, Knigge now produced pamphlets outlining the activities of the outlawed Jesuits, purporting to show how they continued to thrive and recruit, especially in Bavaria. Meanwhile, Knigge's inability to give his recruits any satisfactory response to questions regarding the higher grades was making his position untenable, and he wrote to Weishaupt to effect. In January 1781, faced with the prospect of losing Knigge and his masonic recruits, Weishaupt finally confessed that his superiors and the supposed antiquity of the order were fictitious, and the higher degrees had yet to be written.<sup>45</sup>

If Knigge had expected to learn the promised deep secrets of Freemasonry in the higher degrees of the Illuminati, he was surprisingly calm about Weishaupt's revelation. Weishaupt promised Knigge a free hand in the creation of the higher degrees, and also promised to send him his own notes. For his own part, Knigge welcomed the opportunity to use the order as a vehicle for his own ideas. His new approach would, he claimed, make the Illuminati more attractive to prospective members in the Protestant kingdoms of Germany. In November 1781 the Areopagus advanced Knigge 50 florins to travel to Bavaria, which he did via [Swabia](#) and [Franconia](#), meeting and enjoying the hospitality of other Illuminati on his journey.<sup>46</sup>

#### Internal problems

The order had now developed profound internal divisions. The Eichstaedt command had formed an autonomous province in July 1780, and a rift was growing between Weishaupt and the Areopagus, who found him stubborn, dictatorial, and inconsistent.

Knigge fitted readily into the role of peacemaker.<sup>47</sup>

In discussions with the Areopagus and Weishaupt, Knigge identified two areas which were problematic. Weishaupt's emphasis on the recruitment of university students meant that senior positions in the order often had to be filled by young men with little practical experience. Secondly, the anti-Jesuit ethos of the order at its inception had become a general [anti-religious](#) sentiment, which Knigge knew would be a problem in recruiting the senior Freemasons that the order now sought to attract. Knigge felt keenly the stifling grip of conservative Catholicism in Bavaria, and understood the anti-religious feelings that this produced in the liberal Illuminati, but he also saw the negative impression these same feelings would engender in Protestant states, inhibiting the spread of the order in greater Germany. Both the Areopagus and Weishaupt felt powerless to do anything less than give Knigge a free hand. He had the contacts within and outside of Freemasonry that they needed, and he had the skill as a ritualist to build their projected gradal structure, where they had ground to a halt at *Illuminatus Minor*, with only the Minerval grade below and the merest sketches of higher grades. The only restrictions imposed were the need to discuss the inner secrets of the highest grades, and the necessity of submitting his new grades for approval.<sup>48</sup>

Meanwhile, the scheme to propagate Illuminism as a legitimate branch of Freemasonry had stalled. While Lodge Theodore was now in their control, a chapter of "Elect Masters" attached to it only had one member from the order, and still had a constitutional superiority to the craft lodge controlled by the Illuminati. The chapter would be difficult to persuade to submit to the Areopagus, and formed a very real barrier to Lodge Theodore becoming the first mother-lodge of a new Illuminated Freemasonry. A treaty of alliance was signed between the order and the chapter, and by the end of January 1781 four daughter lodges had been created, but independence was not in the chapter's agenda.<sup>49</sup>

Costanza wrote to the Royal York pointing out the discrepancy between the fees dispatched to their new Grand Lodge and the service they had received in return. The Royal York, unwilling to lose the revenue, offered to confer the "higher" secrets of Freemasonry on a representative that their Munich brethren would dispatch to Berlin. Costanza accordingly set off for Prussia on 4 April 1780, with instructions to negotiate a reduction in Theodore's fees while he was there. On the way, he managed to have an argument with a Frenchman on the subject of a lady with whom they were sharing a carriage. The Frenchman sent a message ahead to the king, some time before they reached Berlin, denouncing Costanza as a spy. He was only freed from prison with the help of the Grand Master of Royal York, and was expelled from [Prussia](#) having accomplished nothing.<sup>50</sup>

#### New system

Knigge's initial plan to obtain a constitution from London would, they realised, have been seen through by the chapter. Until such time as they could take over other masonic lodges that their chapter could not control, they were for the moment content to rewrite the three degrees for the lodges which they administered.<sup>51</sup>

On 20 January 1782, Knigge tabulated his new system of grades for the order. These were arranged in three classes:

- Class I – The nursery, consisting of the Novitiate, the Minerval, and *Illuminatus minor*.
- Class II – The Masonic grades. The three "blue lodge" grades of Apprentice, Companion, and Master were separated from the higher "Scottish" grades of Scottish Novice and Scottish Knight.
- Class III – The Mysteries. The lesser mysteries were the grades of Priest and Prince, followed by the greater mysteries in the grades of Mage and King. It is unlikely that the rituals for the greater mysteries were ever written.<sup>52</sup>

#### Attempts at expansion

Knigge's recruitment from German Freemasonry was far from random. He targeted the masters and wardens, the men who ran the lodges, and were often able to place the entire lodge at the disposal of the Illuminati. In [Aachen](#), Baron de Witte, master of Constance Lodge, caused every member to join the order. In this way, the order expanded rapidly in central and southern Germany, and obtained a foothold in Austria. Moving into the Spring of 1782, the handful of students that had started the order had swelled to about 300 members, only 20 of the new recruits being students.<sup>53</sup>

In Munich, the first half of 1782 saw huge changes in the government of Lodge Theodore. In February, Weishaupt had offered to split the lodge, with the Illuminati going their own way and the chapter taking any remaining traditionalists into their own continuation of Theodore. At this point, the chapter unexpectedly capitulated, and the Illuminati had complete control of lodge and chapter. In June, both lodge and chapter sent letters severing relations with Royal York, citing their own faithfulness in paying for their recognition, and Royal York's failure to provide any instruction into the higher grades. Their neglect of Costanza, failure to defend him from malicious charges or prevent his expulsion from Prussia, were also cited. They had made no effort to provide Costanza with the promised secrets, and the Munich masters now suspected that their brethren in Berlin relied on the mystical French higher grades which they sought to avoid. Lodge Theodore was now independent.<sup>54</sup>

The [Rite of Strict Observance](#) was now in a critical state. Its nominal leader was Prince Carl of Södermanland (later [Charles XIII of Sweden](#)), openly suspected of trying to absorb the rite into the Swedish Rite, which he already controlled. The German lodges looked for leadership to [Duke Ferdinand of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel](#). Suspicion turned to open contempt when it transpired that Carl regarded the [Stuart heir](#) to the British throne as the true Grand Master, and the lodges of the Strict Observance all but ignored their Grand Master. This impasse led to the Convent of Wilhelmsbad.<sup>55</sup>

#### Convent of Wilhelmsbad



"Ruin" castle built by [Prince Charles of Hesse-Kassel](#) in the park at Wilhelmsbad, venue for the last convention of the Strict Observance. Delayed from 15 October 1781, the last convention of the Strict Observance finally opened on 16 July 1782 in the spa town of Wilhelmsbad on the outskirts of (now part of) [Hannover](#). Ostensibly a discussion of the future of the order, the 35 delegates knew that the Strict Observance in its current form was doomed, and that the Convent of Wilhelmsbad would be a struggle over the pieces between the [German mystics](#), under [Duke Ferdinand of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel](#) and their host [Prince Charles of Hesse-Kassel](#), and the [Martinists](#), under [Jean-Baptiste Willermoz](#). The only dissenting voices to mystical higher grades were [Johann Joachim Christoph Bode](#), who was horrified by Martinism, but whose proposed alternatives were as yet unformed, and Franz Dietrich von Ditzfurt, a judge from [Wetzlar](#) and master of the [Joseph of the Three Helmets](#) lodge there, who was already a member of the Illuminati. Ditzfurt publicly campaigned for a return to the basic three degrees of Freemasonry, which was the least likely outcome of the convention. The mystics already had coherent plans to replace the higher degrees.<sup>56</sup>

The lack of a coherent alternative to the two strains of mysticism allowed the Illuminati to present themselves as a credible option. Ditzfurt, prompted and assisted by Knigge, who now had full authority to act for the order, became their spokesman. Knigge's original plan to propose an alliance between the two orders was rejected by Weishaupt, who saw no point in an alliance with a dying order. His new plan was to recruit the masons opposed to the "Templar" higher degree of the Strict Observance.<sup>57</sup>

At the convention, Ditzfurt blocked the attempts of Willermoz and Hesse to introduce their own higher grades by insisting that full details of such degrees be revealed to the delegates. The frustration of the German mystics led to their enrolling Count Kollowrat with the Illuminati with a view to later affiliation. Ditzfurt's own agenda was to replace all of the higher degrees with a single fourth degree, with no pretensions to further masonic revelations. Finding no support for his plan, he left the convention prematurely, writing to the Areopagus that he expected nothing good of the assembly.<sup>58</sup>

In an attempt to satisfy everybody, the Convent of Wilhelmsbad achieved little. They renounced the Templar origins of their ritual, while retaining the Templar titles, trappings and administrative structure. Charles of Hesse and Ferdinand of Brunswick remained at the head of the order, but in practice the lodges were almost independent. The Germans also adopted the name of the French order of Willermoz, les Chevaliers bienfaisants de la Cité sainte (Good Knights of the Holy City), and some Martinist mysticism was imported into the first three degrees, which were now the only essential degrees of Freemasonry. Crucially, individual lodges of the order were now allowed to fraternise with lodges of other systems. The new "Scottish Grade" introduced with the Lyon ritual of Willermoz was not compulsory, each province and prefecture was free to decide what, if anything, happened after the three craft degrees. Finally, in an effort to show that something had been achieved, the convention regulated at length on etiquette, titles, and a new numbering for the provinces.<sup>59</sup>

#### Aftermath of Wilhelmsbad

What the Convent of Wilhelmsbad actually achieved was the demise of the Strict Observance. It renounced its own origin myth,

along with the higher degrees which bound its highest and most influential members. It abolished the strict control which had kept the order united, and alienated many Germans who mistrusted Martinism.

Bode, who was repelled by Martinism, immediately entered negotiations with Knigge, and finally joined the Illuminati in January 1783. Charles of Hesse joined the following month.<sup>60</sup>

Knigge's first efforts at an alliance with the intact German Grand Lodges failed, but Weishaupt persisted. He proposed a new

federation where all of the German lodges would practise an agreed, unified system in the essential three degrees of Freemasonry, and be left to their own devices as to which, if any, system of higher degrees they wished to pursue. This would be a federation of Grand Lodges, and members would be free to visit any of the "blue" lodges, in any jurisdiction. All lodge masters

# A history of why you shouldn't be worried about the Illuminati

More like New World *Dis-order*, amirite?



Stephanie Buck

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Oct 31, 2016 · 5 min read



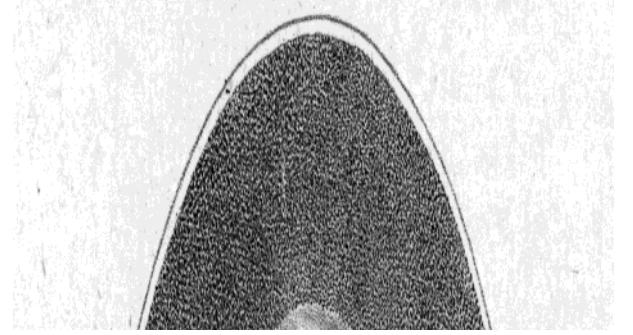
Freemasons assembled for a masonic ceremony at Earls Court, London. (Getty)

**Y**ou know the Illuminati as the clandestine group of satanic crooks corrupting Beyoncé.

The idea invokes conspiracy theories of crooked politicians, celebrities, and CEOs bankrolling a New World Order. If that narrative is to be believed, everyone from [Eminem](#) to Obama has agreed to propagate the agenda of an atheist, occult society orchestrating the trajectory of modern society.

Sorry to say, the actual Illuminati could barely agree on a name, much less construct a 240-year-old international network of operatives.

Tired of Jesuits running everything at the university where he worked, Bavarian professor Adam Weishaupt decided to form a secret group of men essentially to talk shit about organized religion, and shift the focus back to logic and science. On May 1, 1776 he and four other University of Ingolstadt students gathered for the first meeting of the Perfectibilists. Two years later, Weishaupt decided the Perfectibilists name sounded weird, so he changed it to Illuminati (but not before seriously contemplating "The Bee Order." WTF, Adam.). Eventually he got an animal reference, however, by adopting the Owl of Minerva as the group's symbol.



kept the order united, and alienated many Germans who mistrusted illuminism, Bode, who was repelled by illuminism, immediately entered negotiations with Knigge, and finally joined the illuminati in January 1783. Charles of Hesse joined the following month.<sup>125</sup>

Knigge's first efforts at an alliance with the intact German Grand Lodges failed, but Weishaupt persisted. He proposed a new federation where all of the German lodges would practise as agreed, unified system in the essential three degrees of Freemasonry, and be left to their own devices as to which, if any, system of higher degrees they wished to pursue. This would be a federation of Grand Lodges, and members would be free to visit any of the "blue" lodges, in any jurisdiction. All lodge masters would be elected, and no fees would be paid to any central authority whatsoever. Groups of lodges would be subject to a "Scottish Directorate", composed of members delegated by lodges, to audit finances, settle disputes, and authorise new lodges. These in turn would elect Provincial Directories, who would elect inspectors, who would elect the national director. This system would correct the current imbalance in German Freemasonry, where masonic ideals of equality were preserved only in the lower three "symbolic" degrees. The various systems of higher degrees were dominated by the elite who could afford researches in alchemy and mysticism. To Weishaupt and Knigge, the proposed federation was also a vehicle to propagate illuminism throughout German Freemasonry. Their intention was to use their new federation, with its emphasis on the fundamental degrees, to remove all allegiance to Strict Observance, allowing the "eclectic" system of the illuminati to take its place.<sup>126</sup>

The circular announcing the new federation outlined the faults of German freemasonry, that unsuitable men with money were often admitted on the basis of their wealth, that the corruption of civil society had infected the lodges. Having advocated the deregulation of the higher grades of the German lodges, the illuminati now announced their own, from their "unknown Superiors". Lodge Theodore, newly independent from Royal York, set themselves up as a provincial Grand Lodge. Knigge, in a letter to all the Royal York lodges, now accused that Grand Lodge of decadence. Their Freemasonry had allegedly been corrupted by the Jesuits. Strict Observance was now attacked as a creation of the Stuarts, devoid of all moral virtue. The Zinnendorf rite of the *Grand Lodge of the Freemasons of Germany* was suspect because its author was in league with the Swedes. This direct attack had the opposite effect to that intended by Weishaupt, it offended many of its readers. The Grand Lodge of the Grand Orient of Warsaw, which controlled Freemasonry in Poland and Lithuania, was happy to participate in the federation only as far as the first three degrees. Their insistence on independence had kept them from the Strict Observance, and would now keep them from the illuminati, whose plan to annex Freemasonry rested on their own higher degrees. By the end of January 1783 the illuminati's masonic contingent had seven lodges.<sup>127</sup>

It was not only the clumsy appeal of the illuminati that left the federation short of members. Lodge Theodore was recently formed and did not command respect like the older lodges. Most of all, the Freemasons most likely to be attracted to the federation saw the illuminati as an ally against the mystics and *Martinists*, but valued their own freedom too highly to be caught in another restrictive organisation. Even Ditzfurth, the supposed representative of the illuminati at Wilhelmsbad, had pursued his own agenda at the convention.<sup>128</sup>

The non-mystical Frankfurt lodges created an "Eclectic Alliance", which was almost indistinguishable in constitution and aims from the illuminati's federation. Far from seeing this as a threat, after some discussion the illuminati lodges joined the new alliance. Three illuminati now sat on the committee charged with writing the new masonic statutes. Aside from strengthening relations between their three lodges, the illuminati seem to have gained no advantage from this manoeuvre. Ditzfurth, having found a masonic organisation that worked towards his own ambitions for Freemasonry, took little interest in the illuminati after his adherence to the Eclectic Alliance. In reality, the creation of the Eclectic Alliance had undermined all of the subtle plans of the illuminati to spread their own doctrine through Freemasonry.<sup>129</sup>

**Zenith**  
Although their hopes of mass recruitment through Freemasonry had been frustrated, the illuminati continued to recruit well at an individual level. In Bavaria, the succession of *Charles Theodore* initially led to a liberalisation of attitudes and laws, but the clergy and courtiers, guarding their own power and privilege, persuaded the weak-willed monarch to reverse his reforms, and Bavaria's repression of liberal thought returned. This reversal led to a general resentment of the monarch and the church among the educated classes, which provided a perfect recruiting ground for the illuminati. A number of Freemasons from *Prudence* lodge, disaffected by the Martinist rites of the *Chevaliers Bienfaisants*, joined Lodge Theodore, who set themselves up in a gardened mansion which contained their library of liberal literature.<sup>130</sup>

illuminati circles in the rest of Germany expanded. While some had only modest gains, the circle in *Mainz* almost doubled from 31 to 61 members. Reaction to state Catholicism led to gains in Austria, and footholds were obtained in *Warsaw*, *Pressburg* (Bratislava), *Tyrol*, *Milan* and *Switzerland*.<sup>131</sup>

The total number of verifiable members at the end of 1784 is around 650. Weishaupt and Hertel later claimed a figure of 2,500. The higher figure is largely explained by the inclusion of members of masonic lodges that the illuminati claimed to control, but it is likely that the names of all the illuminati are not known, and the true figure lies somewhere between 650 and 2,500. The importance of the order lay in its successful recruitment of the professional classes, churchmen, academics, doctors and lawyers, and its more recent acquisition of powerful benefactors. *Karl August, Grand Duke of Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach*, *Ernest II, Duke of Saxe-Gotha-Altenburg* with his brother and later successor *August*, *Karl Theodor Anton Maria von Dalberg* governor of *Errfur*, *Duke Ferdinand of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel* (already mentioned), his chief assistant in masonic matters, *Johann Friedrich von Schwarz*, and Count Metternich of *Koblenz* were all enrolled. In Vienna, Count Brígido, governor of Galicia, Count Leopold *Kolowrat*, chancellor of *Bohemia* with his vice-Chancellor Baron Kressel, Count Pálffy von Erdöd, chancellor of Hungary, Count Banffy, governor and provincial Grand Master of Transylvania, Count Stadion, ambassador to London, and Baron von Swieten, minister of public education, also joined.<sup>132</sup>

There were notable failures. *Johann Kaspar Lavater*, the Swiss poet and theologian, rebuffed Knigge. He did not believe the order's humanitarian and rationalist aims were achievable by secret means. He further believed that a society's drive for members would ultimately submerge its founding ideals. *Christoph Friedrich Nicolai*, the Berlin writer and bookseller, became disillusioned after joining. He found its aims chimeric, and thought that the use of Jesuit methods to achieve their aims was dangerous. He remained in the order, but took no part in recruitment.<sup>133</sup>

#### Conflict with Rosicrucians

At all costs, Weishaupt wished to keep the existence of the order secret from the *Rosicrucians*, who already had a considerable foothold in German Freemasonry. While clearly *Protestant*, the Rosicrucians were anything but anticlerical, were pro-monarchic, and held views clearly conflicting with the illuminati vision of a rationalist state run by philosophers and scientists. The Rosicrucians were not above promoting their own brand of mysticism with fraudulent seances. A conflict became inevitable as the existence of the illuminati became more evident, and as prominent Rosicrucians, and mystics with Rosicrucian sympathies, were actively recruited by Knigge and other over-enthusiastic helpers. *Kolowrat* was already a high ranking Rosicrucian, and the mystic *Prince Charles of Hesse-Kassel* had a very low opinion of the rationalist higher grades of the illuminati.<sup>134</sup>

The Prussian Rosicrucians, under *Johann Christoph von Wallner*, began a sustained attack on the illuminati. Wöllner had a specially engineered room in which he convinced potential patrons of the effectiveness of Rosicrucian "magic", and his order had acquired effective control of the "Three Globes" and its attached lodges. Through this mouthpiece, the illuminati were accused of *atheism* and revolutionary tendencies. In April 1783, *Frederick the Great* informed Charles of Hesse that the Berlin lodges had documents belonging to the Minerals or illuminati which contained appalling material, and asked if he had heard of them. All Berlin masons were now warned against the order, which was now accused of *Socinianism*, and of using the liberal writings of Voltaire and others, alongside the tolerance of Freemasonry, to undermine all religion. In November 1783, the Three Globes described the illuminati as a masonic sect which sought to undermine Christianity and turn Freemasonry into a political system. Their final anathema, in November 1784, refused to recognise any illuminati as Freemasons.<sup>135</sup>

In Austria, the illuminati were blamed for anti-religious pamphlets that had recently appeared. The Rosicrucians spied on *Joseph von Sonnenfels* and other suspected illuminati, and their campaign of denunciation within Freemasonry completely shut down illuminati recruitment in Tyrol.<sup>136</sup>

The Bavarian illuminati, whose existence was already known to the Rosicrucians from an informant, were further betrayed by the reckless actions of Ferdinand Maria Baader, an Areopagite who now joined the Rosicrucians. Shortly after his admission it was made known to his superiors that he was one of the illuminati, and he was informed that he could not be a member of both organisations. His letter of resignation stated that the Rosicrucians did not possess secret knowledge, and ignored the truly illuminati, specifically identifying Lodge Theodore as an illuminati Lodge.<sup>137</sup>

#### Internal dissent

As the illuminati embraced Freemasonry and expanded outside Bavaria, the council of the Areopagites was replaced by an ineffective "Council of Provincials". The Areopagites, however, remained as powerful voices within the Order, and began again to bicker with Weishaupt as soon as Knigge left Munich. Weishaupt responded by privately slandering his perceived enemies in letters to his perceived friends.<sup>138</sup>

More seriously, Weishaupt succeeded in alienating Knigge. Weishaupt had ceded considerable power to Knigge in depublishing him to write the ritual, power he now sought to regain. Knigge had elevated the Order from a tiny anti-clerical club to a large organisation, and felt that his work was under-acknowledged. Weishaupt's continuing anti-clericalism clashed with Knigge's mysticism, and recruitment of mystically inclined Freemasons was cause of friction with Weishaupt and other senior illuminati, such as Ditzfurth. Matters came to a head over the grade of Priest. The consensus among many of the illuminati was that the ritual was florid and ill-conceived, and the regalia puerile and expensive. Some refused to use it, others edited it. Weishaupt demanded that Knigge rewrite the ritual. Knigge pointed out that it was already circulated, with Weishaupt's blessing, as ancient. This fell on deaf ears. Weishaupt now claimed to other illuminati that the Priest ritual was flawed because Knigge had invented it. Offended, Knigge now threatened to tell the world how much of the illuminati ritual he had made up. Knigge's attempt to create a convention of the Areopagites proved fruitless, as most of them trusted him even less than they trusted Weishaupt. In July 1784 Knigge left the order by agreement, under which he returned all relevant papers, and Weishaupt published a retraction of all slanders against him.<sup>139</sup> In forcing Knigge out, Weishaupt deprived the order of its best theoretician, recruiter, and apologist.<sup>140</sup>

#### Decline

The final decline of the illuminati was brought about by the indiscretions of their own Minerals in Bavaria, and especially in Munich. In spite of efforts by their superiors to curb loose talk, politically dangerous boasts of power and criticism of monarchy caused the "secret" order's existence to become common knowledge, along with the names of many important members. The presence of illuminati in positions of power now led to some public disquiet. There were illuminati in many civic and state governing bodies. In spite of their small number, there were claims that success in a legal dispute depended on the litigant's standing with the order. The illuminati were blamed for several anti-religious publications then appearing in Bavaria. Much of this criticism sprang from vindictiveness and jealousy, but it is clear that many illuminati court officials gave preferential treatment to their brethren. In Bavaria, the energy of their two members of the Ecclesiastical Council had one of them elected treasurer. Their opposition to *Jesuits* resulted in the banned order losing key academic and church positions. In Ingolstadt, the Jesuit heads of department were replaced by illuminati.<sup>141</sup>

Alarmed, *Charles Theodore* and his government banned all *secret societies* including the illuminati.<sup>142</sup> A government edict dated 2 March 1785 "seems to have been deathblow to the illuminati in Bavaria". Weishaupt had fled and documents and internal correspondence, seized in 1786 and 1787, were subsequently published by the government in 1787.<sup>143</sup> Von Zwick's home was searched and much of the group's literature was disclosed.<sup>144</sup>

From <<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Illuminati>>



Adam Weishaupt, founder of the illuminati. (Wikimedia)

The early days of Illuminati were basically a bunch of nerdy

Dungeons and Dragons kids with a Dead Poets

Society complex who really wanted to grow up and

become Scientologists.

**W**ithout much of an original plan other than sheer

frustration with his own powerlessness, Weishaupt looked to the Freemasons as inspiration for his mega-cool secret brotherhood (no women, Jews, or Pagans allowed). The Freemasons were a Western fraternal network that preached morality through symbolic rituals and initiations into three different degrees of Masonry. Weishaupt envied Freemasonry's organization and power but basically wanted his own version of freethinkers. So he joined the Freemasons to covertly study its structure, all the while



## Illuminati

Adam Weishaupt, founder of the Illuminati, an 18th-century Bavarian liberal and secular secret society. The Order of the Illuminati was an Enlightenment secret society founded by university professor Adam Weishaupt on 1 May 1776, in Upper Bavaria, Germany. The movement consisted of advocates of [freethought](#), [secularism](#), [liberalism](#), [republicanism](#), and [gender equality](#), recruited from the German Masonic Lodges, who sought to teach [rationalism](#) through [mystery schools](#). In 1785, the order was infiltrated, broken up and suppressed by the government agents of [Charles Theodore, Elector of Bavaria](#), in his preemptive campaign to neutralize the threat of secret societies ever becoming hotbeds of conspiracies to overthrow the Bavarian [monarchy](#) and its [state religion](#), Roman Catholicism. There is no evidence that the Bavarian Illuminati survived its suppression in 1785.<sup>14</sup>

In the late 18th century, [revolutionary](#) conspiracy theorists, such as Scottish physicist [John Robison](#) and French [Jesuit](#) priest [Augustin Barruel](#), began speculating that the Illuminati had survived their suppression and become the masterminds behind the [French Revolution](#) and the [Reign of Terror](#). The Illuminati were accused of being [subversives](#) who were attempting to secretly orchestrate a [revolutionary wave in Europe](#) and the rest of the world in order to spread the most [radical](#) ideas and movements of the Enlightenment—[anti-clericalism](#), [anti-monarchism](#), and [anti-patriarchalism](#)—and to create a world [nocracy](#) and [cult of reason](#). During the 19th century, fear of an Illuminati conspiracy was a real concern of the European [ruling classes](#), and their oppressive reactions to this unfounded fear provoked in 1848 [the very revolutions they sought to prevent](#).<sup>15</sup>

During the [interwar period](#) of the 20th century, [fascist](#) propagandists, such as British revisionist historian [Nesta Helen Webster](#) and American socialite [Edith Starr Miller](#), not only popularized the myth of an Illuminati conspiracy but claimed that it was a subversive secret society which served the Jewish elites that supposedly propped up both [finance capitalism](#) and [Soviet communism](#) in order to [divide and rule](#) the world. American evangelist [Gerald Burton Winrod](#) and other conspiracy theorists within the [fundamentalist Christian](#) movement in the United States—which emerged in the 1910s as a backlash against the principles of Enlightenment [secular humanism](#), [modernism](#), and [liberalism](#)—became the main channel of dissemination of Illuminati conspiracy theories in the U.S.. [Right-wing populists](#), such as members of the [John Birch Society](#), subsequently began speculating that some collegiate fraternities ([Skull and Bones](#)), gentlemen's clubs ([Bohemian Club](#)), and think tanks ([Council on Foreign Relations](#), [Trilateral Commission](#)) of the [American upper class](#) are [front organizations](#) of the Illuminati, which they accuse of plotting to create a New World Order through a one-world government.<sup>16</sup>

From <[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New\\_World\\_Order\\_\(conspiracy\\_theory\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_World_Order_(conspiracy_theory))>

## Illuminati

designation for various groups

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**Illuminati**, [designation](#) in use from the 15th century, assumed by or applied to various groups of persons who claimed to be unusually [enlightened](#). The word is the plural of the Latin *illuminatus* ("revealed" or "enlightened").



**Illuminati: Adam Weishaupt**

Adam Weishaupt.

*Historia Collection/Shutterstock.com*

### TOP QUESTIONS

What does the name *illuminati* refer to?

What are the origins of the illuminati?

What was the Bavarian illuminati group?

Who are some notable members of illuminati groups?

## Early illuminati

According to adherents, the source of the “light” was viewed as being directly communicated from a higher source or due to a clarified and exalted condition of the [human intelligence](#). To the former class belong the [Alumbrados](#) (Spanish: “enlightened”) of [Spain](#). Spanish historian [Marcelino Menéndez y Pelayo](#) first finds the name about 1492 (in the form *aluminados*, 1498) but traces them back to a [gnostic](#) origin and thinks their views were promoted in Spain through influences from [Italy](#). One of their earliest leaders—indeed, some scholars style her as a “pre-Alumbrado”—was Maria de Santo Domingo, who came to be known as La Beata de Piedrahita. She was a labourer’s daughter, born in Aldeanueva, south of [Salamanca](#), about 1485. She joined the [Dominican](#) order as a teenager and soon achieved renown as a prophet and mystic who could converse directly with [Jesus Christ](#) and the [Virgin](#). [Ferdinand of Aragon](#) invited her to his court, and he became convinced of the sincerity of her visions. The Dominicans appealed to Pope [Julius II](#) for guidance, and a series of trials were [convened](#) under the [auspices](#) of the [Inquisition](#). Her patrons, which by then included not only Ferdinand but also [Francisco Cardenal Jiménez de Cisneros](#) and the [duke of Alba](#), ensured that no decision was taken against her, and she was cleared in 1510.

[St. Ignatius of Loyola](#), while studying at Salamanca (1527), was brought before an [ecclesiastical](#) commission on a charge of sympathy with the Alumbrados, but he escaped with an [admonition](#). Others were not so fortunate. In 1529 a congregation of unlettered adherents of [Tolosa](#) was visited with [scourging](#) and imprisonment. Greater rigours followed, and for about a

recruiting more Illuminati.

Weishaupt enlisted early Illuminati member Xavier von Zwack to establish a strong membership base in Munich. Zwack was able to pull a few influential members who weren’t all trust fund college kids. Besides that whole no-women-or-Jews thing, ideal candidates were “rich, docile, willing to learn, and aged 18–30.”

When the Illuminati had gathered more members, Weishaupt applied for a separate lodge under the Freemason umbrella. He called the new lodge *Theodore of the Good Council*, intending to flatter [Charles Theodore, Elector of Bavaria](#), and invited all his Illuminati recruits to join. Shady af.

In 1780, the Illuminati recruited the man who would become its most influential member, Adolph Knigge. Still in his twenties, Knigge had achieved the highest level of the Freemason order but became frustrated by the lack of growth potential. By this time, the Illuminati had established three of its own grades: Novice, Minerval, and Illuminated Minerval, with Weishaupt touting the highest level’s “extensive” initiations. Knigge was intrigued and quickly reached the Minerval level by studying the required liberal literature, which was banned in Bavaria, and recruiting more members. Soon, he’d completed all the levels Weishaupt had created. In an attempt to buy time, Weishaupt brainstormed what came next. Knigge called his bluff, then proposed some ideas of his own.

Knigge first suggested filling more senior positions within the Illuminati group, as most were still occupied by immature students. Then he massaged the group’s messaging, which had turned anti-religious by this point and served to detract some members. On January 20, 1782, he revised the system of Illuminati orders:

- Class I — The nursery (the Noviciate, the Minerval, and Illuminatus minor)
- Class II — The Masonic grades (“blue lodge” grades of Apprentice, Companion, and Master; and higher “Scottish” grades of Scottish Novice and Scottish Knight)
- Class III — The Mysteries (lesser grades of Priest and Prince; higher grades of Mage and King)

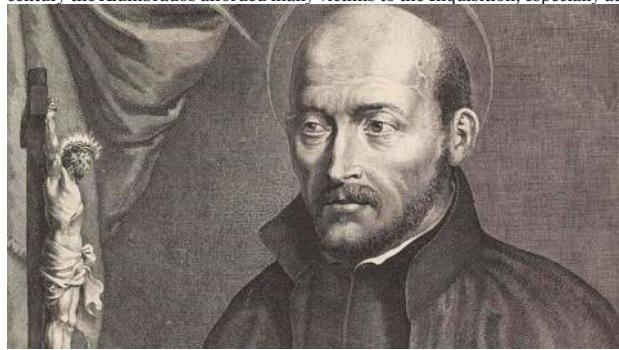
By the spring of 1782, the Illuminati had reached 300 members under Knigge’s influence.

Meanwhile, through a series of ugly restructurings, Lodge Theodore found itself wholly independent from the Freemasons, meaning the Illuminati had freedom to pursue whatever weird initiation rituals they saw fit. (Most of the early years seemed more like an administrative comedy of errors than actual work, kind of like *The Office*.) Politically frustrated Freemasons defected for the Illuminati and its more “eclectic” approach, apparently devoid of power structures like Martinism. By January 1773, the group had seven lodges across Germany. By 1784, total Illuminati membership numbered between 650 and 2,500 (such is the inexact arithmetic of secret societies).

Once it recruited a bunch of influential scholars and benefactors, word spread of the Illuminati’s growing reputation. As a result, competing brotherhoods used their own baller members to warn against its liberal agenda. Then Weishaupt and Knigge had a falling out over the Priest ritual—*yada yada yada*—Knigge resigned, members got sloppy, and news of the “secret” order became common knowledge. Shockingly, it turned out some of the order’s most influential members held public office. In a fit of rage against the group that was so thirsty to please him, Charles Theodore outlawed all secret societies by March 1785, under penalty of death.

cleared in 1510.

St. Ignatius of Loyola, while studying at Salamanca (1527), was brought before an ecclesiastical commission on a charge of sympathy with the Alumbrados, but he escaped with an admonition. Others were not so fortunate. In 1529 a congregation of unlettered adherents at Toledo was visited with scourging and imprisonment. Greater rigours followed, and for about a century the Alumbrados afforded many victims to the Inquisition, especially at Córdoba.



St. Ignatius of Loyola

St. Ignatius of Loyola.

Courtesy of the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

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The movement (under the name of Illuminés) seems to have reached France from Seville in 1623. It attained some prominence in Picardy when joined (1634) by Pierre Guérin, curé of Saint-Georges de Roye, whose followers, known as Guerinets, were suppressed in 1635. Another body of Illuminés surfaced in the south of France in 1722 and appears to have lingered till 1794, having affinities with those known contemporaneously as "French Prophets," an offshoot of the Protestant militant Camisards.

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Of a different class were the Rosicrucians, who claimed to have originated in 1422 but achieved public notice in 1537. Their teachings combined something of Egyptian Hermetism, Christian gnosticism, Jewish Kabbala, alchemy, and a variety of other occult beliefs and practices. The earliest extant writing which mentions the Rosicrucian order was the *Fama Fraternitatis*, first published in 1614 but probably circulated in manuscript form somewhat earlier than this. It recounts the journey of the reputed founder of the movement, Christian Rosenkreuz, to Damascus, Damcar (a legendary hidden city in Arabia), Egypt, and Fès, where he was well received and came into possession of much secret wisdom. He returned finally to Germany, where he chose three others to whom he imparted this wisdom and thus founded the order. Later the number was increased to eight, who separated, each going to a separate country. One of the six articles of agreement they adopted was that the fraternity should remain secret for 100 years. At the end of 120 years the secret burial place and the perfectly preserved body of the founder were discovered by one of the then members of the order, along with certain documents and symbols held in very high esteem by Rosicrucians. The sacred vault was re-covered, the members of the order dispersed, and the location of the vault was lost to history. The *Fama* ends with an invitation to "some few" to join the fraternity. Among those believed to have been associated with the order were German alchemist Michael Maier, British physician Robert Fludd, and British philosopher and statesman Sir Francis Bacon.



Robert Fludd

Robert Fludd, detail of an engraving from *Integrum Morborum Mysterium*, 1631.

Courtesy of the Royal College of Physicians, London



outlawed all secret societies by March 1785, under penalty of death.



Secret societies got a bad name over the years, in part for their weird secretive rituals. (Keystone/Getty Images)

After some quiet years, author John Robinson released *Proofs of a Conspiracy* in 1797, an anti-Freemasonry book that accused such societies of continuing to influence a New World Order. Spinoff books and theories circulated into the 20th century, demonizing the Illuminati as a sinister, pagan cult when in fact its origins amounted to nothing more than a dried up German circle jerk.

Still, concerns over the Illuminati remained relatively quiet



Francis Bacon

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## The Bavarian illuminati

Perhaps the group most closely associated with the name *illuminati* was a short-lived movement of [republican](#) free thought founded on [May Day](#) 1776 by Adam Weishaupt, professor of [canon law](#) at [Ingolstadt](#) and a former [Jesuit](#). The members of this [secret society](#) called themselves "Perfectibilists." Their founder's aim was to replace [Christianity](#) with a religion of [reason](#), as later did the [revolutionaries of France](#) and the 19th-century positivist philosopher [Auguste Comte](#). The order was organized along Jesuit lines and kept internal [discipline](#) and a system of mutual surveillance based on that model. Its members pledged obedience to their superiors and were divided into three main classes: the first included "novices," "minervals," and "lesser illuminati"; the second consisted of freemasons ("ordinary," "Scottish," and "Scottish knights"); and the third or "mystery" class [comprised](#) two grades of "priest" and "regent" as well as "magus" and "king." Beginning with a narrow circle of [disciples](#) carefully selected from among his own students, Weishaupt gradually extended his recruitment efforts from Ingolstadt to Eichstätt, [Freising](#), [Munich](#), and elsewhere, with special attention being given to the enlistment of young men of wealth, rank, and social importance. From 1778 onward Weishaupt's illuminati began to make contact with various [Masonic](#) lodges, where, under the impulse of [Adolf Franz Friedrich, Freiherr von Kniege](#), one of their chief converts, they often managed to gain a commanding position. It was to Kniege that the society was indebted for the extremely elaborate constitution (never, however, actually realized) as well as its internal communication system. Each member of the order had given him a special name, generally [classical](#), by which he alone was addressed in official writing (Weishaupt was referred to as [Spartacus](#) while Kniege was [Philo](#)). All internal correspondence was conducted in [cipher](#), and to increase the mystification, towns and provinces were invested with new and altogether arbitrary [designations](#). At its period of greatest development, Weishaupt's "Bavarian Illuminati" included in its operations a very wide area, extending from [Italy](#) to [Denmark](#) and from [Warsaw](#) to [Paris](#); at no time, however, do its numbers appear to have exceeded 2,000. The order and its doctrines appealed to literary giants such as [Johann Wolfgang von Goethe](#) and [Johann Gottfried von Herder](#) as well as the dukes Ernest II of Gotha and [Charles Augustus of Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach](#). Such notables were claimed as members although it is questionable if they were actually so. Weishaupt's illuminati were believed to have included astronomer [Johann Bode](#), writer and bookseller [Friedrich Nicolai](#), philosopher [Friedrich Jacobi](#), and poet [Friedrich Leopold, Graf zu Stolberg-Stolberg](#).



Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, oil painting by Joseph Karl Stieler, 1828; in the Neue Pinakothek, Munich. Courtesy of the Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, München, Neue Pinakothek



Johann Gottfried von Herder

Johann Gottfried von Herder, detail of an oil painting by Gerhard von Kügelgen, 1808; in the Library of Tartu State University, Estonia. Courtesy of the Library of Tartu State University

Secret societies of this kind fitted in with the idea of [benevolent despotism](#) as a vehicle for the [Enlightenment](#), as Goethe shows in [Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship](#). The movement suffered from internal dissension and was ultimately banned by an edict of the [Bavarian government](#) in 1785. Some members were imprisoned, while others were driven from their homes. Weishaupt was stripped of his chair at Ingolstadt and banished from Bavaria. After 1785 the historical record contains no further activities of Weishaupt's illuminati, but the order figured prominently in [conspiracy theories](#) for centuries after its disbanding. It was credited with activities ranging from the instigation of the [French Revolution](#) to the [assassination of U.S. Pres. John F. Kennedy](#), and the notion of an all-knowing [cabal](#) of ancient masters remained a powerful image in

origins amounted to nothing more than a dried up German circle jerk.

Still, concerns over the Illuminati remained relatively quiet until the mid-1990s. Then Prodigy released his 1995 remix of LL Cool J's "I Shot Ya." He raps: "Illuminati want my mind, soul, and my body / Secret society trying to keep they eye on me." Over the next few years, hip hop artists like AZ, the Wu-Tang Clan, and Dr. Dre coincidentally(?) invoked either the Illuminati or the New World Order. According to a [Daily Beast](#) breakdown, rapper Canibus' 1998 single "Channel Zero" claims the government and astronomer Carl Sagan communicate with aliens, which also explains Roswell, duh. Armchair conspiracy theorists seized the opportunity to demonize successful black artists. Entertainers like Jay Z *must* have sold their souls to the devil if they're rapping about it...And while we're at it, so did Rihanna, Kanye, LeBron James, and Barack Obama.

The popularity of conspiracy books like *Angels and Demons*, coupled with 9/11 truthers and the growth of the web only fanned the crazy flames. Whenever a celebrity wears a triangle pattern, truthers accuse them of referencing the eye on the back of a dollar bill, and its Masonic origins. If [Beyoncé likes goats](#), she obviously worships Baphomet, a pagan [deity](#).

And she probably put these [goats in these trees](#), too.

#illuminati

From <<https://timeline.com/illuminati-history-8f90c2e03bd9>>

the popular [consciousness](#) into the 21st century.



## Illuminati

### QUICK FACTS

#### KEY PEOPLE

- [Montanus](#)
- [Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin](#)
- [Nikolay Ivanovich Novikov](#)

#### RELATED TOPICS

- [Organization](#)

#### DID YOU KNOW?

- The modern conspiracy theories surrounding the illuminati were first popularized by Robert Wilson and Kerry Thornley through fictional works and fake letters to magazines in the 1960s.
- The group most closely associated with the name "illuminati" was formed in Bavaria in 1776 by Adam Weishaupt, who wanted an alternative to the Freemasons for intellectuals and influential figures.
- The organization was banned in 1785, and during enforcement of the ban, authorities found documents that defended suicide and atheism, as well as instructions for abortions.

## Later illuminati

After the suppression of Weishaupt's order, the title *illuminati* was given to the French Martinists, founded in 1754 by Martinez Pasqualis and [propagated](#) by [Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin](#). By 1790 Martinism had been spread to [Russia](#) by Johann Georg Schwarz and [Nikolay Novikov](#). Both strains of "illuminated" Martinism included elements of Kabbalism and Christian mysticism, imbibing ideas from [Jakob Böhme](#) and [Emanuel Swedenborg](#).

From <<https://www.britannica.com/topic/illuminati-group-designation#ref1258858>>

# Adam Weishaupt

Saturday, May 29, 2021 3:48 PM

Johann Adam Weishaupt ([\['jo:han 'a:dam 'vars.hapt\]](#), 6 February 1748 – 18 November 1830)<sup>[\[1\]](#)[\[2\]](#)[\[3\]](#)[\[4\]](#)</sup> was a German philosopher, professor of civil law and later canon law, and founder of the [Illuminati](#), a secret society.

At a time, however, when there was no end of making game of and abusing secret societies, I planned to make use of this human foible for a real and worthy goal, for the benefit of people. I wished to do what the heads of the ecclesiastical and secular authorities ought to have done by virtue of their offices ...<sup>[\[2\]](#)</sup>

On 1 May 1776 Johann Adam Weishaupt founded the "Illuminati" in the Electorate of Bavaria. He adopted the name of "Brother [Spartacus](#)" within the order. Even encyclopedia references vary on the goal of the order, such as *New Advent* saying the Order was not [egalitarian](#) or democratic internally, but sought to promote the doctrines of equality and freedom throughout society<sup>[\[1\]](#)</sup> while others such as *Collier's* have said the aim was to combat religion and foster rationalism in its place<sup>[\[3\]](#)</sup>. The actual character of the society was an elaborate network of spies and counter-spies. Each isolated cell of initiates reported to a superior, whom they did not know: a party structure that was effectively adopted by some later groups.<sup>[\[4\]](#)</sup>

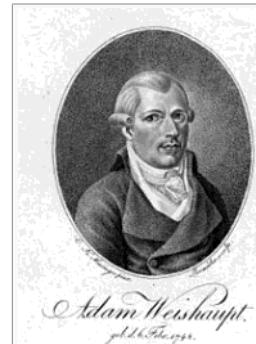
Weishaupt was initiated into the [Masonic lodge](#) "Theodor zum guten Rath", at Munich in 1777. His project of "illumination, enlightening the understanding by the sun of reason, which will dispel the clouds of superstition and of prejudice" was an unwelcome reform.<sup>[\[1\]](#)</sup> He used [Freemasonry](#) to recruit for his own quasi-masonic society, with the goal of "perfecting human nature" through re-education to achieve a communal state with nature, freed of government and organized religion. Presenting their own system as pure masonry, Weishaupt and [Adolph Freiherr Knigge](#), who organised his ritual structure, greatly expanded the secret organisation.<sup>[\[5\]](#)</sup>

Contrary to Immanuel Kant's [famous dictum](#) that [Enlightenment](#) (and Weishaupt's Order was in some respects an expression of the Enlightenment Movement) was the passage by man out of his 'self-imposed immaturity' through daring to 'make use of his own reason, without the guidance of another,' Weishaupt's Order of Illuminati prescribed in great detail everything which the members had obediently to read and think, so that Dr. Wolfgang Riedel has commented that this approach to illumination or enlightenment constituted a degradation and twisting of the Kantian principle of Enlightenment.<sup>[\[6\]](#)</sup> Riedel writes:

'The independence of thought and judgement required by Kant ... was specifically prevented by the Order of the Illuminati's rules and regulations. Enlightenment takes place here, if it takes place at all, precisely *under* the direction of another, namely under that of the "Superiors" [of the Order].'<sup>[\[7\]](#)</sup>

Weishaupt's radical rationalism and vocabulary were not likely to succeed. Writings that were intercepted in 1784 were interpreted as seditious, and the Society was banned by the government of [Karl Theodor](#), Elector of Bavaria, in 1784. Weishaupt lost his position at the University of Ingolstadt and fled Bavaria.<sup>[\[8\]](#)</sup>

From <[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adam\\_Weishaupt](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adam_Weishaupt)>



1799 portrait of Weishaupt

<b>Born</b>	Johann Adam Weishaupt 6 February 1748 <a href="#">Ingolstadt, Bavaria, Holy Roman Empire</a>
<b>Died</b>	18 November 1830 (aged 82) <a href="#">Gotha, Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, German Confederation</a>
<b>Era</b>	<a href="#">Enlightenment era</a>
<b>Region</b>	Western Philosophy
<b>School</b>	<a href="#">Empiricism</a>
<b>Main interests</b>	<a href="#">Epistemology, Metaphysics, Ethics</a>
<b>Influences</b>	show
<b>Influenced</b>	show

From <[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adam\\_Weishaupt](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adam_Weishaupt)>

# Adolph Knigge

Saturday, May 29, 2021 6:13 PM

**Freiherr** Adolph Franz Friedrich Ludwig Knigge (16 October 1752 – 6 May 1796) was a [German](#) writer, [Freemason](#), and a leading member of the Order of the [Illuminati](#).



## Über den Umgang mit Menschen (On Human Relations)

Knigge was born in Bredenbeck (now a part of [Wennigsen](#), [Lower Saxony](#)) in the [Electorate of Hanover](#) as a member of the lesser nobility. When he was barely eleven, his mother died, and when his father died three years later the teenager inherited a large debt. His creditors took possession of the family property and assigned the boy a meagre pension of 500 thalers.<sup>11</sup> He studied law from 1769 to 1772 in [Göttingen](#) where he became a member of Corps Hannovera. He was allegedly [initiated](#) into Freemasonry in 1772 in [Kassel](#), where he held a position as Court Squire ([hofjunker](#)) and Assessor of the War and Domains Exchequer. In 1777 he became Chamberlain at the [Weimar](#) court.

In 1780 Knigge joined [Adam Weishaupt](#)'s [Bavarian Illuminati](#) and his work with the Illuminati gave the group a great deal of publicity and influence of Masonic [chapters](#).<sup>12</sup> But in 1783 dissensions arose between Knigge and Weishaupt, which resulted in Knigge's final withdrawal from the group on 1 July 1784. Knigge stated that he could no longer endure Weishaupt's pedantic domineering, which frequently assumed offensive forms. He accused Weishaupt of "Jesuitism", and suspected him of being "a [Jesuit](#) in disguise" (Nachtr., I, 129). "And was I", he adds, "to labour under his banner for mankind, to lead men under the yoke of so stiff-necked a fellow?—Never!"

Knigge's involvement with the Illuminati, support of the advancement of [human rights](#), and a period of serious illness led to the loss of support of his aristocratic sponsors and finally his fortune. Knigge found a measure of financial stability again with a position in [Bremen](#) in 1790. He died in Bremen in 1796.

In [Germany](#), Knigge is best remembered for his book *Über den Umgang mit Menschen (On Human Relations)*, a treatise on the fundamental principles of human relations that has the reputation of being the authoritative guide to behaviour, politeness, and etiquette. The work is more of a sociological and philosophical treatise on the basis of human relations than a how-to guide on etiquette, but the German word "Knigge" has come to mean "good manners" or books on etiquette.

From <[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adolph\\_Freiherr\\_Knigge](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adolph_Freiherr_Knigge)>

## Adolph Freiherr Knigge



Freiherr Adolph Knigge

Born	Adolph Franz Friedrich Ludwig Knigge October 16, 1752 <a href="#">Wennigsen</a> , <a href="#">Germany</a>
Died	May 6, 1796 (aged 43) <a href="#">Bremen</a> , <a href="#">Germany</a>
Nationality	<a href="#">German</a>
Education	<a href="#">University of Göttingen</a>
Occupation	Writer/Speaker
Children	Franz Ludwig Knigge, Philippine Auguste Amalie von Reben, Wilhelm Baron von Knigge
Parent(s)	Carl Philipp Freiherr Knigge (father) Louise Wilhelmine Knigge (mother)
Signature	

From <[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adolph\\_Freiherr\\_Knigge](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adolph_Freiherr_Knigge)>

# Conspiracies

Saturday, May 29, 2021 3:43 PM

## 20 Shocking Illuminati Conspiracy Theories

[Jacob Jul 09, 2017](#) [World](#)

The Illuminati is a secret society founded in May 1776 which has become synonymous with conspiracy theories about world domination under a unified global government, more commonly known as the new world order. Historically the name refers to the Bavarian Illuminati, an Enlightenment-era group founded by Adam Weishaupt, a philosophy and law professor at the University of Ingolstadt.

Its goals were clear: to oppose superstition, obscurantism, religious influence over public life, and abuses of state power. In their own words, "The order of the day is to put an end to the machinations of the purveyors of injustice, to control them without dominating them".

Although historical evidence points to the society's demise at the hands of prince-elector and Duke of Bavaria Charles Theodore roughly 10 years after its formation, some believe the organisation to have originated into other groups which aim to fulfil the Illuminati's original goals.

Since then, conspiracy theories have accused the Illuminati of influencing the course of the world in many different ways. In this article, we'll look at the 20 most shocking conspiracy theories to have been linked with the Illuminati.

### 20 A NEW WORLD ORDER

Via: [pinterest.com](#)

By and large, this is the most popular conspiracy theory associated with the Illuminati. It's also the original theory from which the vast majority of other conspiracies are weaved. The simplicity of this conspiracy goes some way towards explaining its popularity. We all intuitively feel there's something wrong with the world we live in. Millions of people die from poverty, famine and curable diseases and we assume such misery has to be orchestrated by the elites to keep the middle and the lower classes fighting each other while they run off with all the money.

This conspiracy clearly states the Illuminati are pursuing a new world order under a global totalitarian government and influence world events to serve this agenda.

### 19 BANKING CONSPIRACY

Via: [sooziq.com](#)

Some of the most powerful people who are believed to be in the Illuminati belong to select families. The most notable of which are the Rothschilds who've played a crucial role in the banking conspiracy for hundreds of years. Specialized in funding both sides of the same war to hedge their own bets, the Rothschilds were financially involved in the American Civil War and the French Revolution.

Other famous families include the Chase, Morgan, Carnegie, Ford, and Rockefeller, who, together with the Rothschilds, are supposed to control most countries' central banks, which have the power to print money, unbeknownst by any precious metals. With some international cooperation happening supposedly through organisations like the International Monetary Fund, this conspiracy paints a scary picture of incredible power gathered at the very top.

### 18 THEY ARE EVERYWHERE

Via: [humansarefree.com](#)

This theory aims to instil in our hearts the feeling that the Illuminati are present in every department that matters, and it is so all throughout the globe. Their people have infiltrated every room where important decisions are made, from the Oval Office to 10 Downing Street, as well as the boardrooms of the most successful companies and the most influential government agencies. From politics to business and even religion, the Illuminati are everywhere. They lead religions and have corrupted the highest levels of the Freemasonry. They also exert their influence in the realms of media, thereby controlling the information transmitted to the general public and the films and TV shows they watch.

### 17 THE FRENCH REVOLUTION WAS THEIR FIRST STAGED EVENT

Via: [history.com](#)

The Illuminati are also accused of having orchestrated the French Revolution, in what would have been their first attempt to influence a major event on a global scale. Looking back on the Revolution that started in 1789, we can recognise it for the seminal event that it was.

According to this conspiracy, after having survived their suppression by Charles Theodore, the Illuminati became the masterminds behind the French Revolution as they secretly orchestrated the revolutionary wave that would later sweep through Europe and the rest of the world. Their ultimate goal was to spread their values of anti-clericalism, anti-monarchism, and anti-patriarchalism throughout the world.

### 16 JFK ASSASSINATED BY THE ILLUMINATI

Via: [youtube.com](#)

You were probably expecting this one. In another spin-off of the New World Order conspiracy theory, the Illuminati are associated with the assassination of United States President John F. Kennedy. The suspicious circumstances surrounding this event have provided fertile ground for conspiracy theorists.

The lack of credible evidence supporting the official version has led proponents of the "Illuminati did it" club to claim that the secret society looked at JFK (and other Kennedy family members) as a political obstacle to their totalitarian goals that simply had to be removed. They also claim JFK was shot by his driver, instead of Lee Harvey Oswald.

### 15 THE ILLUMINATI RELY ON SATANIC RITUALS

Via: [mississippi-spi.blogspot.com](#)

Goat symbols and devil worship are some of the satanic rituals associated with the Illuminati. This theory goes back to the origins of the organisation, claiming their anti-clericalism was merely cover for their satanic intentions. According to this theory, through the cult of Lucifer, the Illuminati derive their power to influence world events and carry out their agenda.

The Pope and the Catholic Church are claimed to also be closeted-Satanists, working with the Illuminati to bring about the new world order which will be led by the Anti-Christ. Obama was the latest to be named as the Anti-Christ by advocates of this theory.

### 14 9/11 ILLUMINATI INVOLVEMENT

Via: [becuo.com](#)

After the JFK assassination, 9/11 was probably next on your list of conspiracy theories you were likely to find as soon as you got past the title of the article. Well, you're right! The rubble was still shifting and everyone already had a theory regarding who's behind it, which can be easily attributed to the dissonance between facts and the official version.

The Illuminati conspiracy theory behind 9/11 claims Bush was just a puppet pandering to their interests. According to these claims, this is very common as governments often attack their own people in order to serve the Illuminati. This type of [false-flag attack](#) is used in order to push through legislation that restricts the citizen's liberties. Have you heard this before?

### 13 PEARL HARBOUR – ANOTHER ILLUMINATI JOB

Via: [historyonthenet.com](#)

The Pearl Harbour attack was the most destructive blow ever inflicted to the American military, and conspiracy theories about the United States President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's foreknowledge of the attack have been around ever since.

Theorists backing this claim suggest there is ample evidence pointing to the fact Pearl Harbor had been foreseen. President Roosevelt, who led America at the time of Pearl Harbor, is credited with the following eerie statement: "In politics, nothing happens by accident. If something happens, you can bet it was planned that way."

With any major world event, suspicions of an Illuminati hand guiding proceedings are never too far behind.

### 12 BOSTON MARATHON BOMBINGS

Via: [npr.com](#)

In April 2013, two homemade bombs were made to detonate 12 seconds and 210 yards shortly before 3 pm, close to the finish line of the annual Boston Marathon. Hundreds were injured with several people losing limbs and three individuals paying with their lives.

Following the false-flag attack logic, conspiracies emerged surrounding the presumed Illuminati involvement in the attacks. The only difference is that, in this case, there is more circumstantial evidence linking this case to the Illuminati – the finish line was at 666 Boylston Street Boston while there is a Masonic lodge on the same street. 666 is the number associated with the satanic cult and the Freemasonry is claimed to have strong links to the Illuminati.

Due to this, the Boston Marathon bombings are referred to by these conspiracy theorists as a human sacrifice.

### 11 GOVERNMENT PLANES POISON THE ATMOSPHERE

Via: [atcmemes.com](#)

When regular planes cross the sky, they leave behind something called a condensation trail. These condensation trails dissipate within a few minutes. Illuminati conspiracy theories accuse the secret society of having gotten involved with a new type of condensation trail in the 1990s.

This new type of condensation trails is known as chemical trails or chemtrails. Chemical trails take a long time to dissipate as they frequently expand into artificial clouds which hover in the sky for longer periods throughout the day. These are heavily linked with higher levels of aluminum and other heavy metals.

Overexposure to this causes a multitude of illnesses which theorists claim the Illuminati use to weaken the masses. Don't beat yourself up for wanting to stay in every now and then.

### 10 THE ILLUMINATI LOVE DRUGS

Via: [youtube.com](#)

It is no accident that most suspected mass shooters are found under the influence of some sort of psychoactive drug. Fans of this theory claim these people are deliberately drugged in order to get them to perform tasks they wouldn't do in regular condition. A prime example of this type of task would be a mass killing of members of your species.

These unstable minds don't usually remember being kidnapped and drugged, which only excites proponents of this theory. The Illuminati use psychoactive drugs that are used to manipulate people into doing their bidding and to distort perception at the level of the masses.

### 9 THE GREAT DEPRESSION

Via: [bp.blogspot.com](#)

The Great Depression is believed by some to have been the work of the Illuminati. These people claim that when the Federal Reserve was created, this gave the Illuminati the tool they wanted – a central bank unaccountable to the people.

With this move, conspiracy theorists claim the Illuminati's banking cartel captured full control of the money and credit machinery of the United States. They claim the unplanned shortage of call money in the New York money market wasn't unplanned after all. They believe it to have been a mechanism of the impoverishment of the American people, transferring more wealth to the very top.

### 8 WHITNEY HOUSTON IS AN ILLUMINATI SACRIFICE

Via: [businessinsider.com](#)

I'm supposed to be unbiased in my account of these conspiracy theories but I'd be lying if I said I didn't have a favourite in every

## The Illuminati Conspiracy Theory

February 11, 2019 at 12:26pm by [krishnan.101](#)

By: [Nisha Krishnan](#)

Someone who is a proponent of the Illuminati conspiracy theory believes that there is an elite and secret organization called the "Illuminati" who is seeking to create a dominant world totalitarian government (Bergara & Medej, 2016). This "New World Order," so named, involves a single government (made up of Illuminati members) that would rule over the entire planet. According to a survey done about the Illuminati, 23% of Americans believe in the Illuminati and New World Order (Bergara & Medej, 2016).

There also seems to be a link with conservative beliefs, as many conservatives are unhappy with the amount of involvement of the government in private affairs. There are many different theories as to who runs the Illuminati, but the general consensus is that celebrities and government officials alike are part of it. Information about the Illuminati is heavily prevalent on the conspiracy theories section of YouTube, in documentaries, and on websites such as [www.illuminationofficial.org](#). This theory enjoys popularity today, as most people are somewhat aware of the Illuminati, even if they don't believe in it. This theory is extraordinary because its claims are extraordinary—they go against everything we know about our world currently. As far as we are taught, different countries have different governments, and America especially has safeguards against authoritarianism. The idea that there is a group who will control everything defies the Founding Fathers' wishes of freedom for citizens—what our country is founded on.

There are many different forms of evidence that people use to justify the existence of the Illuminati. For instance, there are certain symbols such as the Eye of Horus and pyramid (both on US currency), and when people see this in popular media, they believe it is evidence for that company/organization's involvement in the Illuminati (Hahn, 2018). Another reason people believe that the Illuminati exists is because it did exist in the past (Santoro, 2018). It was created by Weishaupt in Germany, who wanted to have a group where people could have discussions about secularism (Bergara & Medej, 2016). However, during this time period, the Illuminati was about anti-religiosity and free thought. But many people believe that when the Church shut down Weishaupt's group, it continued underground and exists today under the New World Order plan. Another piece of evidence that supporters use is that cops have become more heavily armed than ever, which is indicative of the government militarizing the police (Santoro, 2018). Under a New World Order, we would have to have a strong police force to control citizens. Finally, there are many claims that the Illuminati is "killing celebrities and replacing them with clones" in an attempt to brainwash society (Bergara & Medej, 2016). These claims are backed up by video footage showing certain celebrities looking confused or staring off into space, to suggest that they are "glitching". For example, there are clips of Beyoncé, Eminem, and Al Roker staring off into space or freezing for prolonged periods of time in news clips (Bergara & Medej, 2016).

There is also a laundry list of evidence that questions the existence of the Illuminati. For one, there is not conclusive evidence that definitely shows that the Illuminati exists (Hahn, 2018). Much of the evidence touted for the Illuminati relies on theories made by proponents, or video clips interpreted by proponents. However, there isn't a way to test that the Illuminati exists, because it is impossible to prove that it doesn't exist (since it is supposedly a "secret society"). Additionally, many people have questioned why a society that is supposed to be so secretive would put out so many "hints" that they exist for followers to interpret (Hahn, 2018). If the society was real, and their primary goal was to hide their existence, it would make more sense for them to erase any videos or online content discussing the Illuminati, and not show any proof to the world (currently there are thousands of Illuminati conspiracy videos on YouTube). Finally, there is the point that in our capitalist society, the ability to make money by any means necessary is very important. Skeptics point out that if people put occult or Illuminati symbolism in their content, it will help them gain popularity because people love to talk about conspiracies (Hahn, 2018). If influencers are purposefully including this material in their content, it would falsify at least some of the claims of the "proof" of the Illuminati.

There are two major cognitive contributions that are influential in people's propensities to believe in the Illuminati—confirmation bias, and the error of logic discussed in FILCHeR. For confirmation bias, much of the proof that is used to verify the existence of the Illuminati is popular culture—videos, news, celebrity behavior, etc. When people see these ambiguous sources of information, they will often find a way to construe the evidence in a way that supports their belief. For example, there was a clip of Beyoncé at a basketball game where she was zoned out for 30 minutes and moving her head from side to side. This video was used as proof that celebrities are killed and then replaced with clones that sometimes "glitch". This was an ambiguous source—Beyoncé could have simply been zoned out and moving her head because her eyes were tracking the movement of the game of basketball she was watching. However, Illuminati conspiracists interpreted this video to mean that Beyoncé is a part of the Illuminati and she was glitching. When every piece of ambiguous information shown to you is interpreted by you to be evidence for the Illuminati, this reifies the strength of the belief you hold. In the lines of the example discussed, these conspiracists would be ignoring all of the times Beyoncé was behaving "normally" because it didn't fit into their narrative. Another cognitive contribution is the issue of logic. Ryan Bergara and Shane Medej (2016) interviewed a professor of conspiracy theories who discussed how many Illuminati supporters use a "trail of evidence" to support their beliefs. They start in small steps where their logic sounds rational, and then suddenly make a crazy leap to where their evidence starts to sound irrational (Bergara & Medej, 2016). This fits into an issue with logic because while the premises may be true, the conclusions do not follow from the premises. For example, they may start by discussing how the government is overly involved in people's lives (rational, especially after the Patriot Act) and then make the jump that all of government is made up of lizard people that control the world. I believe that those who believe the theory are misinformed because they believe that there are these complex meaningful patterns in randomness (apophenia), and it is easy to fall into this level of mistakenness when the information starts small as a "foot in the door" and spirals into these huge unbelievable conspiracy theories.

I wouldn't say there is one specific community that Illuminati believers come from, but there are certainly characteristics that are common between subsets of the population. One characteristic is conservative beliefs. As mentioned above, the Illuminati and conservatives share the critical belief that the government is heavily involved in the lives of its citizens. Many of the current Illuminati theorists are right wing, including Mark Koernke, David Icke, Pat Robertson, and Donald Marshall (Bergara & Medej, 2016). Another characteristic that stems from right-wing extremism is anti-Semitism. The Illuminati conspiracy is inherently anti-Semitic because a large part of the population of believers think that Jews control the world (similar to the propaganda touted during Nazi Germany). To believe that any one group controls the world is in line with the idea of the Illuminati and the New World Order. Finally, I would say that generally, Illuminati proponents are people who have a great deal of cynicism and mistrust of the world around them. To believe in conspiracies is to believe that what you see around you is not objective reality, but rather a reality created to somehow dupe you. The social influences that help sustain their beliefs involve a sense of community. When you have

With this move, conspiracy theorists claim the Illuminati's banking cartel captured full control of the money and credit machinery of the United States. They claim the unplanned shortage of cash money in the New York money market wasn't unplanned after all. They believe it to have been a mechanism of the impoverishment of the American people, transferring more wealth to the very top.

#### **8. WHITNEY HOUSTON IS AN ILLUMINATI SACRIFICE**

Via: businessinsider.com

I'm supposed to be unbiased in my account of these conspiracy theories but I'd be lying if I said I didn't have a favourite in every list. This entry is my favourite on this list and I think it'll be yours too. Several celebrities such as Madonna, Jay-Z, Beyoncé, Rihanna are claimed to belong to the Illuminati, who value their exposure and use their music videos to spread their society's imagery.

This theory claims Whitney Houston was a member of the Illuminati. Nothing shocking up until this point. Advocates of this conspiracy claim Whitney Houston was sacrificed by the Illuminati for two reasons: 1) to celebrate Queen Elizabeth II's Diamond Jubilee. Queen Elizabeth II is presumed to be an honoured member of the secret society who perhaps had a long-standing beef with Whitney Houston. 2) To make room in the society for Blue Ivy Carter. You heard it here first.

#### **7. BLUE IVY – ILLUMINATI CHOSEN ONE?**

Via: galleryhip.com

You may have been left wondering 'Who is Blue Ivy Carter?' after the last conspiracy theory. Well, Blue Ivy Carter is the daughter of Jay-Z and Beyoncé Knowles in case you've been living under a rock and have missed the obscene levels of media coverage this baby has received.

Blue Ivy is a child who already has an Illuminati conspiracy theory built around her, which is pretty impressive when you account for the fact she probably can't do her taxes or go to the potty without help. The theory claims her name has a hidden meaning. Blue Ivy stands for "Born Living Under Evil Illuminati's Very Youngest."

#### **6. REPTILIAN ALIENS**

Via: humansarefree.com

A British conspiracy theorist named David Icke has defended the existence of reptilian humanoids who are shape-shifting, blood-drinking aliens who seek to take control of our planet by adopting a human form with the sole purpose of gaining political power to manipulate humanity.

Icke has claimed on several occasions that many of the world leaders are, or are possessed by, these so-called reptilians. These leaders include former United States President George W. Bush and Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom. According to his Wikipedia page, Icke has given lectures in 47 countries to crowds of up to 6,000.

A 2013 poll suggests that 4% of American voters agree with Icke's ideas.

#### **5. AMERICAN CITIZENS TO BE GATHERED IN FEMA CONCENTRATION CAMPS**

Via: globaltruth.net

The FEMA camps conspiracy defends that the Illuminati will use one of the organisations they control – the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency – to imprison American citizens in concentration camps. Why? Advocates of this theory maintain this will be one of the final steps taken by the secret society in their relentless pursuit of a totalitarian government.

In order to achieve a totalitarian government, you need to get rid of the dissidents, which is precisely where FEMA comes into the fray. Large numbers of United States citizens will be imprisoned as a prelude to their certain extermination, thereby allowing the Illuminati to establish the New World Order they so desire.

#### **4. H1N1 PANDEMIC ORCHESTRATED BY THE ILLUMINATI**

Via: blogs.biomedcentral.com

According to this conspiracy theory, the Illuminati have been testing viruses for several generations and epidemics such as the Spanish flu of 1918, SARS or the H1N1 virus were consequences of their work in this field.

An online testimony guarantees the H1N1 pandemic resulted from tests conducted by Illuminati in a desolate part of Brazil's forests. The surrounding locals had to be quarantined but a traveller escaped and carried the virus into Mexico.

This report states the Illuminati were displeased with the lack of effectiveness of the virus as they were after a virus that could kill the entire population of a country in a matter of days.

#### **3. AN ILLUMINATI-RUN MACHINE WHICH CAN PRODUCE NATURAL CATASTROPHES**

Via: humansarefree.com

HAARP stands for High-Frequency Active Auroral Research Program and is the cornerstone of several conspiracy theories. The program was started in a joint effort of several branches of the United States Military to investigate the ionosphere.

However, conspiracy theorists have had a field day with this program's creation. They claim this program has produced a machine with the capability of "weaponizing" weather and the Illuminati have already tested it out with Hurricane Katrina.

This machine is supposed to be kept in a highly secretive underground bunker in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. More on this topic in the next entry.

#### **2. THE ILLUMINATI'S NETWORK OF UNDERGROUND BUNKERS**

Via: worldtruth.tv

This incredible conspiracy theory claims the Illuminati run a network of over 400 underground bunkers spread throughout the world, the largest of which being in São Paulo, Brazil. Apparently, there are 57 of these underground bases and bunkers in the United States alone.

These bunkers are claimed to be 5-star hotels built underground to hold members of the Illuminati in the case of a massive catastrophe. In addition, they also serve as meeting rooms for some of their more numerous gatherings, as well as to deposit large amounts of food, money and recreational drugs. Where else would you rather be when the world ends?

#### **1. MARTIN LUTHER KING ASSASSINATED BY THE ILLUMINATI**

Via: impiousdigest.com

Much like the 9/11 attacks, Pearl Harbour and the JFK assassination, Martin Luther King Jr's assassination has been used by several conspiracy theorists as yet another liquidation carried out by the interests which serve the Illuminati. Martin Luther King is claimed to have been killed by the secret society due to his stance against the Vietnam War but mostly because of what he stood for as a whole.

The Illuminati do not want a society of equals and MLK's inspiring message posed a grave threat to their ultimate goal of uniting the nation's of the world under one global totalitarian government.

From <<https://www.theclever.com/20-shocking-illuminati-conspiracy-theories/>>

illuminati and the New World Order. Finally, I would say that generally, Illuminati proponents are people that have a great deal of cynicism and mistrust of the world around them. To believe in conspiracies is to believe that what you see around you is not objective reality, but rather a reality created to somehow dupe you. The social influences that help sustain their beliefs involve a sense of community. When you have a deep mistrust of the world around you, this ideology goes against our major beliefs of reality. This may isolate you from the larger community, but when you find people who are like you and who believe what you believe, this justifies your commitment to the belief. If you were alone in your belief, you might give into the pressure of societal norms. But with a strong community of believers, you have people to back up your point of view.

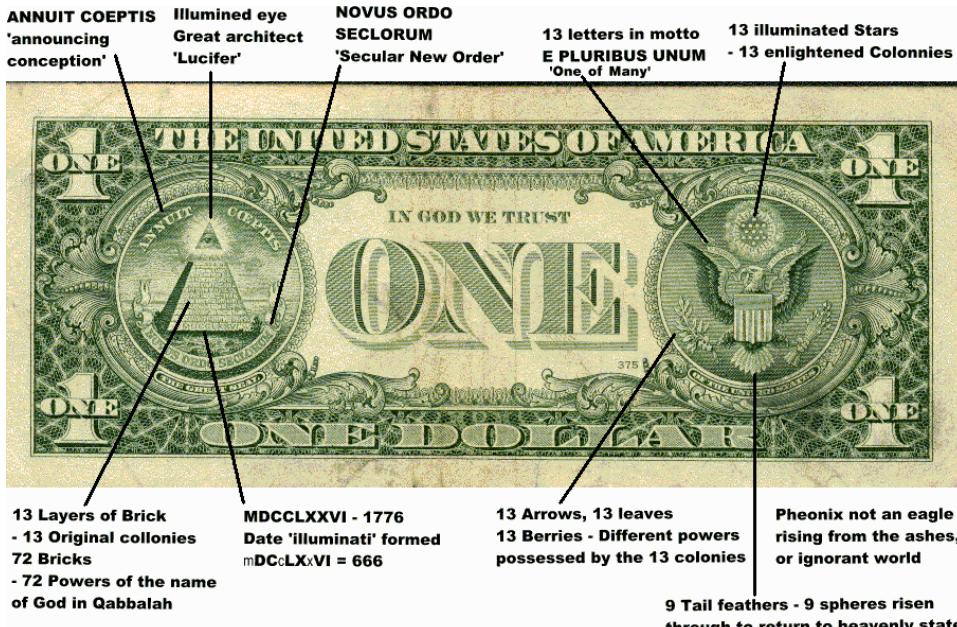
Whether you believe in the Illuminati or not, you cannot deny that it is one of the most popular conspiracies out there currently. The problem with this belief is that it reifies stereotypical beliefs of Jews controlling the world, and it creates a sense of fear and panic in society to propose that we will all be controlled in an authoritarian government some day. The psychological explanations for the belief system, including confirmation bias, logic errors, stereotype heuristics, and herd mentality help to create a more holistic view of this conspiracy theory. By understanding why people have this belief and how it is maintained psychologically, we can attempt to educate the world to think more critically about unverified conspiracy theories, as well as analyze the world around us in a more scientific way.

From <<https://u.osu.edu/vanzandt/2019/02/11/the-illuminati-conspiracy-theory-2/>>

# The new world order

Saturday, May 29, 2021 3:44 PM

## The Illuminati and the New World Order



The conspiracy theory about the secret society, Illuminati, as the main drivers of creating a New World Order has been in existence since the late 1700s. Though the illustrious history of the Illuminati is hard to capture in a few short paragraphs, here is the general summary:

This far-reaching and extremely popular theory posits that the world is run by a small group of international elites, who are puppeteers pulling the strings of governments, media organizations and industries. The Illuminati is comprised of super-rich industrialists who use the banks to dominate nations. They are also responsible for every major war and political and financial world event for one goal – the New World Order.

The New World Order was a term coined by statesmen such as Woodrow Wilson and Winston Churchill, in reference to a new period of history after World War 2. The term encompassed an opportunity to implement a global governance to benefit global citizens, and saw the establishment of organizations including the UN and the World Bank.

In the eye of theorists, the New World Order is the eventual rule of a single, totalitarian world government, which will replace all sovereign nation-states. Political and financial events – wars, natural disasters, poverty, inflation, depression – both historical and current, are all seen as steps toward this eventual world domination. Accordingly, the Illuminati meet every year to discuss secret global agendas that work towards this totalitarian regime.

From <<https://allthatsinteresting.com/popular-conspiracy-theories>>

## Famous (Alleged) Illuminati Members



Xavier Freeman

Updated December 21, 2020 9.0m views 74 items

This is a list of all famous Illuminati members, past and present. . . allegedly. Everyone mentioned on this list is rumored to have talked about the Illuminati, used their symbology or practiced Illuminati rituals in some way—whether privately or in the public eye. These possible famous Illuminati members range from world leaders to pop culture celebrities.

The Illuminati was founded in 1776 in Bavaria by Adam Weishaupt. It was initially created to house the [great thinkers](#) of the area and was modeled after another secret society, the Freemasons. A few years later the government outlawed all secret societies so the Illuminati was thought to be disbanded, though they have been the focus of numerous [conspiracy theories](#) throughout the years. Some theories are that the Illuminati members run the world behind the scenes as a New World Order, some say that the Illuminati is run by shape-shifting lizard/human hybrids. In any case the debate of who is a member of the Illuminati has captured our fascination for years. Who are famous Illuminati members? This list is a culmination of names of suspected celebrity Illuminati members from various internet sources and should not be considered definitive.

Alleged Illuminati celebs include singers, rappers, and high profile Hollywood actors. Even powerful businessmen and women are alleged to have Illuminati ties along with other world leaders, and business people in leadership positions (even entire companies are alleged to have Illuminati ties). Angelina Jolie and Jay Z are just a few examples of alleged Illuminati members. Rihanna is another of the rumored prominent members of Illuminati.

Read on for more information about stars who are rumored to be a part of the Illuminati.



Photo: mfrissen / [flickr](#) / CC-BY-NC-ND 2.0

### Angelina Jolie

Angelina Jolie has long been associated with the Illuminati. Her film "Tomb Raider" was largely based around an Illuminati filled storyline. More recently, Jolie's decision to undergo a double mastectomy has been [viewed as a larger plan](#) to benefit the Illuminati. Her decision to have the procedure coincided with a Supreme Court ruling to approve the BRCA1 patent which tests for the genetic possibility of breast cancer in women.

If women embrace this BRCA1 test, Illuminati run pharmaceutical companies stand to make billions of dollars in profits.

- **Born:** 1975-06-04
- **Birthplace:** Los Angeles, California, United States of America
- **Gender:** Female
- **Credits:** Maleficent, Changeling, Mr. & Mrs. Smith, Salt

More [Angelina Jolie](#)

[Fun Facts You Didn't Know About Angelina Jolie](#) #170 of 349 [The Best Actresses In Film History](#) #78 of 201 [The Best Actresses Working Today](#)



Photo: vpickering / [flickr](#) / CC-BY-NC-ND 2.0

### Paris Hilton

The Hilton's are a very prominent family and it is thought that the Illuminati perform mind control experiments on one of the children of these families. Perhaps that is why Paris Hilton landed in a [prison psych ward](#) back in 2007.

- **Born:** 1981-02-17

[Paris Hilton - New York City, New York, United States of America](#)

## Who Are the Members of the Illuminati? (with pictures)



Some conspiracy theorists claim that the Kennedy family is one of the 13 powerful families that make up the Illuminati.

The reported members of the [Illuminati](#) include the royal families of several nations as well as a large handful of prominent leaders in finance, technology, and the upper levels of various national governments. This secret organization has long been a subject of speculation and [conspiracy theory](#) among researchers who attempt to draw connections between the Illuminati and major world events throughout history. Although membership in this group is often thought to be conditional on royal bloodlines, several famous non-royal names are included in available membership lists. The main purpose of this secret society is reportedly to create a single global government known as the New World Order.



The royal families of several nations are thought to be members of the Illuminati.

Some well-publicized theories about Illuminati membership claim that it is only open to people born into one of 13 powerful families, some of which have famous names such as Kennedy, Rothschild, and Rockefeller. Various theorists report that no outsider can join the upper ranks of the Illuminati, which is a factor that sets the organization apart from other known secret societies. Since the highest-ranking members exert such extensive control behind the scenes of governments and economies, membership is strictly limited to new members who are born into the right family with the right bloodline.



Photo: vpickering / [flickr](#) / CC-BY-NC-ND 2.0

## Paris Hilton

The Hilton's are a very prominent family and it is thought that the Illuminati perform mind control experiments on one of the children of these families. Perhaps that is why Paris Hilton landed in a [prison psych ward](#) back in 2007.

- **Born:** 1981-02-17
- **Birthplace:** New York City, New York, United States of America
- **Gender:** Female

• **Credits:** Zoolander, House of Wax, Repo! The Genetic Opera, Wonderland, The Cat in the Hat

[More Paris Hilton](#)

Remembering David Letterman's Relentlessly Rude Paris Hilton Interview#1410 of 1,891 [The Greatest Musical Artists of All Time](#)#186 of 186 [The Best Hot Ones Guests Ever](#)



Photo: Tatiana\_0000 / [flickr](#) / CC-BY 2.0

## Britney Spears

Britney Spears is widely believed to be another victim of Illuminati mind control. Also she has featured Illuminati symbolism in her videos for "Work B\*tch" and "I Wanna Go."

- **Born:** 1981-12-02
- **Birthplace:** McComb, Mississippi, United States of America
- **Gender:** Female

• **Credits:** Bridesmaids, Austin Powers in Goldmember, Spring Breakers, Knocked Up

[More Britney Spears](#)

[The Most Cringeworthy Moments Revealed In The 'Framing Britney Spears' Documentary](#)#228 of 243 [The Most Trustworthy Celebrities In The World](#)#429 of 739 [The Best Singers Of All Time](#)



Photo: Featureflash Photo Agency / [Shutterstock](#)

## Kim Kardashian

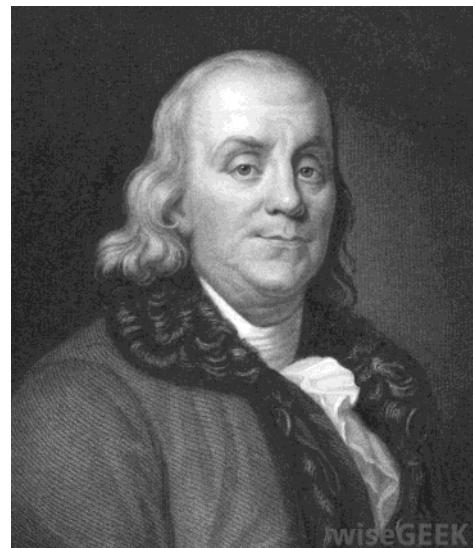
Kim Kardashian has denied that she is a member of the Illuminati, but her soon-to-be husband Kanye West is alleged to be a prominent member. Also, the [Kardashian's 2013 Christmas card](#) is full of Illuminati symbolism.

- **Born:** 1980-10-21
- **Birthplace:** Los Angeles, California, United States of America
- **Gender:** Female

• **Credits:** Keeping Up with the Kardashians, Kourtney & Kim Take New York, Kourtney & Kim Take Miami, Kim Kardashian: Fit in Your Jeans by Friday - Amazing Abs Body Sculpt

[More Kim Kardashian](#)

[Here Are All The Celebrities Who Have Fallen Victim To The Kardashian Curse](#)#314 of 391 [The Most Beautiful Women Of 2021, Ranked](#)#11 of 57 [Celebrities You're Sick Of In 2021](#)



[Benjamin Franklin was a reported member of the Illuminati.](#)

Common threads among the Illuminati members are notable wealth, power, and success. Several Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of multinational corporations such as [Bill Gates](#) of Microsoft are counted among its mid-level members. While they may not belong to royal bloodlines, these members are said to be recruited and trained from early ages in order to ensure their loyalty and dedication to the Illuminati's purpose of eventual world control. In exchange for unwavering loyalty, the organization gives its recruited members access to secrets that facilitate their vast accumulation of wealth and domination of certain industries.



[Eye above the pyramid on the US one dollar bill, which is thought to represent the Illuminati.](#)

Founders of the United States such as Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson are also counted among members of this secret and powerful organization. Many theorists connect the establishment of the US as a new nation to calculated strategies for a new world government. Some researchers claim that every US president has belonged to the Illuminati and only rises to power thanks to the organization's various maneuverings. A frequently-documented [conspiracy theory](#) claims that high-ranking members actually control presidential elections as well as both major political parties. Even though the word literally means "People of Light", several theorists attribute the Illuminati's power and influence to the practice of black magic and other occult rituals.

From <<https://www.infobloom.com/who-are-the-members-of-the-illuminati.htm>>



Photo: avrillllla / [flickr](#) / CC-BY 2.0

### Rihanna

Rihanna's music video for "What Now" is full of [Illuminati imagery](#). She also has been known to publicly flash the Illuminati hand symbol, in which you make your hands into a diamond.

- **Born:** 1988-02-20

- **Birthplace:** Saint Michael Parish, Barbados

- **Gender:** Female

- **Credits:** The Hangover, Wreck-It Ralph, 21, I Love You, Man

**More** [Rihanna](#)

[The Best Rihanna Songs of All Time](#)#327 of 739 [The Best Singers Of All Time](#)#5 of 198 [The Greatest New Female Vocalists of the Past 10 Years](#)



Photo: Lynze / [flickr](#) / CC-BY-NC-ND 2.0

### Halle Berry

Halle Berry is [widely believed](#) to be a member of the Illuminati.

- **Born:** 1966-08-14

- **Birthplace:** Cleveland, Ohio, United States of America

- **Gender:** Female

- **Credits:** X-Men, Boomerang, Monster's Ball

**More** [Halle Berry](#)

[The Best Halle Berry Movies of All Time, Ranked](#)#124 of 349 [The Best Actresses In Film History](#)#92 of 201 [The Best Actresses Working Today](#)

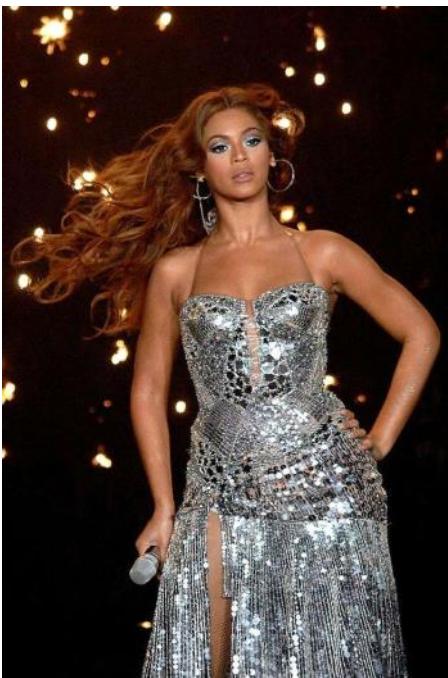


Photo: beelover9481 / [flickr](#) / CC-BY 2.0

### [Beyoncé Knowles](#)

Jay-Z and Beyoncé are [believed to be prominent members](#) of the Illuminati. Beyoncé regularly integrates Illuminati symbols into her videos and performances. She even made the Illuminati hand symbol, of a diamond, during her Super Bowl performance.

- **Born:** 1981-09-04
- **Birthplace:** Houston, Texas, United States of America
- **Gender:** Female
- **Credits:** Austin Powers in Goldmember, The Great Gatsby, Dreamgirls, Epic

[More Beyoncé Knowles](#)

[The Best Songs Ft. Beyoncé](#)#235 of 243 [The Most Trustworthy Celebrities In The World](#)#7 of 101 [The Best Current Female Singers](#)



Photo: [JStone](#) / [Shutterstock](#)

### [Miley Cyrus](#)

Miley Cyrus has fully embraced Illuminati symbolism. She also has a [tattoo of the all seeing eye](#) on her finger and a tattoo of Leonardo da Vinci's, who is associated with the Illuminati, heart drawing on her forearm.

- **Born:** 1992-11-23
- **Birthplace:** Nashville, Tennessee, United States of America
- **Gender:** Female
- **Credits:** Bolt, Justin Bieber: Never Say Never, The Last Song, Hannah Montana: The Movie

[More Miley Cyrus](#)

[The Best Songs Ft. Miley Cyrus](#)#199 of 500 [The Best Female Vocalists Ever](#)#1419 of 1,891 [The Greatest Musical Artists of All Time](#)



Photo: [chrisweger](#) / [Wikimedia Commons](#) / CC-BY-SA 2.0

### **Madonna**

Like Beyonce, Madonna also used her [Super Bowl performance](#) as a platform to showcase Illuminati symbols and imagery.

- **Born:** 1958-08-16
- **Birthplace:** Bay City, Michigan, United States of America
- **Gender:** Female
- **Credits:** Madonna: Truth or Dare, Desperately Seeking Susan, Dick Tracy, Evita

[More Madonna](#)

[The Best Madonna Albums of All Time](#)#373 of 739 [The Best Singers Of All Time](#)#105 of 500 [The Best Female Vocalists Ever](#)



Photo: Carl Bjorklund / [Shutterstock](#)

### **Kanye West**

Kanye West is widely believed to be in the Illuminati, [though he denies it](#). His video for "Power" is filled with Illuminati symbols and imagery.

- **Born:** 1977-06-08
- **Birthplace:** Atlanta, Georgia
- **Gender:** Male
- **Credits:** The Great Gatsby, Mission: Impossible III, The Hangover, The Hangover Part II

[More Kanye West](#)  
[The Best Yeezy Shoes, Ranked](#)#1268 of 2,753 [The Most Influential People of All Time](#)#12 of 238 [The Greatest Rappers Of All Time](#)



[Frequently voted on Secret Societies From History You'd Most Want to Infiltrate](#)



Photo: Drop of Light2 / [Shutterstock](#)

### **Barack Obama**

Barack Obama has been photographed making the Illuminati [sign of the devil](#). His administration have also made several decisions that directly benefit several businessmen that are believed to be in the Illuminati. For instance, the government bank bail out directly benefits the most powerful men in the world.

- **Born:** 1961-08-04
- **Birthplace:** Honolulu, Hawaii, United States of America
- **Gender:** Male
- **Credits:** By The People: The Election of Barack Obama, 60 Minutes, Mistaken for Strangers, Senator Obama Goes to Africa

[More Barack Obama](#)

[Silly Things People Blame Barack Obama For](#)#47 of 243 [The Most Trustworthy Celebrities In The World](#)#13 of 45 [The Greatest U.S. Presidents Of All Time](#)

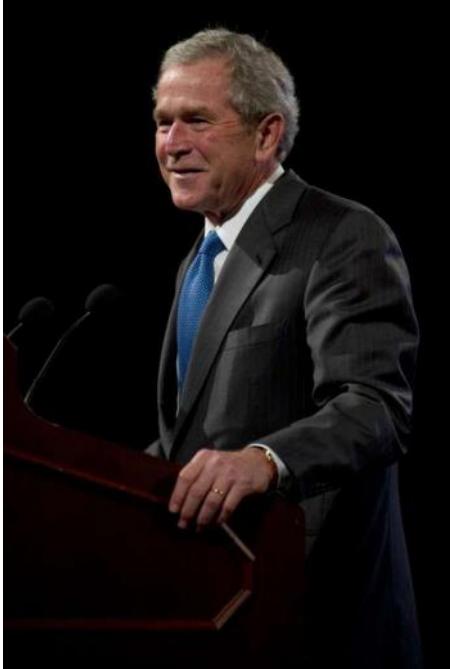


Photo: Christopher Halloran / [Shutterstock](#)

### **George W. Bush**

Like Barack Obama, George Bush has also been photographed making the sign of the devil with his hands. Also, the 9/11 attacks are [believed to be an inside job](#) that directly benefited some of the most powerful members of the Illuminati.

- **Born:** 1946-07-06
- **Birthplace:** New Haven, Connecticut, United States of America
- **Gender:** Male
- **Credits:** Journeys with George, Being W, Pursuit of Equality, CBS News Special Report: Joint News Conference

[More George W. Bush](#)

[All 33 George W. Bush Original Paintings That Were Made Public](#)#16 of 44 [Which US Presidents Do You Wish Were In Charge Right Now?](#)#389 of 904 [Celebrity Death Pool 2021](#)



Photo: [German Federal Archives / Wikimedia Commons / CC-BY-SA 3.0](#)

## [Adolf Hitler](#)

It is largely believed that Adolf Hitler and the Nazis [were funded by the Illuminati](#). The Rockefeller family, who are alleged to be Illuminati leaders, gave tons of money to Hitler, who actually is of the same bloodline as the Rockefellers.

- **Born:** 1889-04-20
- **Birthplace:** Braunau am Inn, Austria
- **Gender:** Male
- **Credits:** World War II in HD Colour, Apocalypse: The Second World War

[More Adolf Hitler](#)

[Freaky Coincidences That Aided Hitler's Rise to Power](#)#297 of 2,753 [The Most Influential People of All Time](#)#238 of 347 [The Most Important Leaders In World History](#)#2



Photo: Helga Esteb / [Shutterstock.com](#)

## [Lady Gaga](#)

Lady Gaga frequently highlights Illuminati symbols and imagery into her music videos and performances. She has been photographed several times [covering one eye](#), which leaves one "all seeing eye" revealed.

- **Born:** 1986-03-28
- **Birthplace:** New York City, New York, United States of America
- **Gender:** Female
- **Credits:** Lady Gaga Presents: The Monster Ball Tour at Madison Square Garden, Machete Kills, Lady Gaga: Paparazzi

[More Lady Gaga](#)  
[Glamorous Lady Gaga Interviews That Remind Us Why She's Our Favorite 'AHS' Cast Member](#)#183 of 243 [The Most Trustworthy Celebrities In The World](#)#2 of 198 [The Greatest New Female Vocalists of the Past 10 Years](#)



Photo: [Jaguar PS / Shutterstock](#)

### [Justin Bieber](#)

Justin Bieber has denied being a member of the Illuminati, but he has several Illuminati themed tattoo. Biebs has an "all seeing eye" on his forearm and a [tattoo of an owl](#), which is believed to represent Moloch an Illuminati God.

- **Born:** 1994-03-01
- **Birthplace:** London, Canada
- **Gender:** Male

• **Credits:** Justine Bieber: Never Say never, Justine Bieber's Believe, The Karate Kid, Step Up revolution

More [Justin Bieber](#)

Celebrities Who Have Dissed Justin Bieber#679 of 739 [The Best Singers Of All Time](#)#193 of 284 [The Hottest Men Of 2021](#),

Ranked



Photo: Featureflash / [Shutterstock](#)

### [Jay-Z](#)

Jay-Z has fully embraced the diamond hand sign of the Illuminati and he [frequently encourages his fans](#) to join him in "raising their diamonds." He also features occult phrases on his Rocawear clothing line.

- **Born:** 1969-12-04
- **Birthplace:** New York City, New York
- **Gender:** Male

• **Credits:** The Great Gatsby, The Hangover Part II, Men in Black 3, Rush Hour

More [Jay-Z](#)

Every Athlete Signed To Jay-Z's Roc Nation Sports, Ranked#11 of 238 [The Greatest Rappers Of All Time](#)#565 of 1,891 [The Greatest Musical Artists of All Time](#)



Photo: Zoran Veselinovic / [Wikimedia Commons](#) / CC-BY-SA 2.0

## Michael Jackson

Michael Jackson featured Illuminati imagery on his "Dangerous" album cover. It is believed that Jackson was previously involved with the Illuminati, but after he became too popular, the powers that be turned on him and manipulated the media to encourage the downfall of Michael Jackson. Many people believe that the Illuminati went as far as to [kill Jackson to prevent him from speaking out](#).

- **Born:** 1958-08-29
- **Birthplace:** Gary, Indiana, United States of America
- **Gender:** Male
- **Credits:** This Is It, Michael Jackson: Thriller, The Wiz, Michael Jackson: Video Greatest Hits - HIStory

[More Michael Jackson](#)

[The Best Michael Jackson Songs of All Time](#)#2 of 739 [The Best Singers Of All Time](#)#719 of 2,753 [The Most Influential People of All Time](#)



Photo: Andrew Milligan sumo / [flickr](#) / CC-BY 2.0

## Joseph Stalin

Russian dictator Joseph Stalin was believed to be [working for the Illuminati](#), who were funding his efforts in WWII.

- **Born:** 1878-12-18
- **Birthplace:** Gori, Georgia
- **Gender:** Male
- **Credits:** World War II in HD Colour, Apocalypse: The Second World War

[More Joseph Stalin](#)

[Did Stalin Really Force Soviet Scientists To Create A Human-Chimpanzee Hybrid?](#)#514 of 1,355 [The Greatest Minds of All Time](#)#

163 of 347 [The Most Important Leaders In World History](#)



Photo: Jack Taylor/Stringer / [Getty Images](#)

### **[Bill Clinton](#)**

Bill Clinton has been photographed demonstrating Illuminati hand symbols. He is also [rumored to be an illegitimate descendant](#) of the power Illuminati family the Rockefellers.

- **Born:** 1946-08-19
- **Birthplace:** Hope, Arkansas, United States of America
- **Gender:** Male
- **Credits:** Fire in the Blood, The Final Days, The Last Party, Of Civil Wrongs & Rights: The Fred Korematsu Story

[More Bill Clinton](#)

[10 Details About Bill Clinton's Past That Would Have Ended His Career Today](#)#19 of 45 [The Greatest U.S. Presidents Of All Time](#)#

13 of 44 [Which US Presidents Do You Wish Were In Charge Right Now?](#)



Photo: Michael Evans / [Wikimedia Commons / Public Domain](#)

### **[Ronald Reagan](#)**

Ronald Reagan has been photographed displaying Illuminati hand symbols. He is also believed to have used his presidency to promote the needs of the [Illuminati](#).

- **Born:** 1911-02-06
- **Birthplace:** Tampico, Illinois, United States of America
- **Gender:** Male
- **Credits:** General Electric Theater, Kings Row, Knute Rockne All American, Bedtime for Bonzo

[More Ronald Reagan](#)

[28 Things You Probably Didn't Know About Ronald Reagan](#)#71 of 243 [The Most Trustworthy Celebrities In The World](#)#

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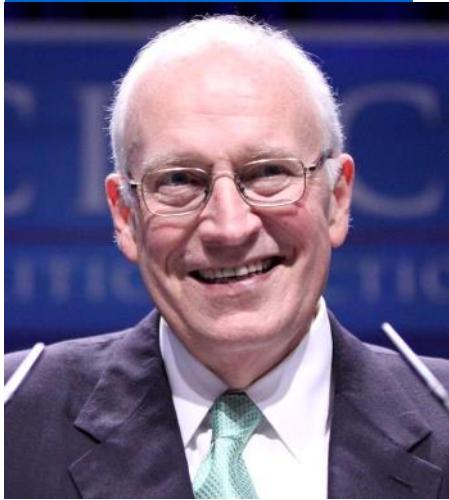


Photo: Gage Skidmore / [Wikimedia Commons / CC-BY-SA 3.0](#)

### **[Dick Cheney](#)**

It is largely believed that Dick Cheney controlled the Bush administration to [promote the needs of the Illuminati](#). More recently, several Illuminati conspiracy theories have surfaced that suggest that Trayvon Martin was killed as an Illuminati sacrifice. Allegedly, his death served two purposes... to distract the American public from things that the government were doing and to provide Dick Cheney with a heart transplant.

- **Born:** 1941-01-30
- **Birthplace:** Lincoln, Nebraska, United States of America
- **Gender:** Male
- **Credits:** Gasland, Special Report with Bret Baier, Rush to War

[More Dick Cheney](#)



Photo: U.S. Embassy New Delhi / [Flickr](#)

### **John F. Kennedy**

It is believed that John F. Kennedy was previously working with the Illuminati. When he began to resist, the Illuminati [orchestrated his assassination](#).

- **Born:** 1917-05-29
- **Birthplace:** USA, Massachusetts, Brookline
- **Gender:** Male
- **Credits:** A Profile in Courage, The Sixties, The Age of Kennedy, Part I: The Early Years

[More John F. Kennedy](#)  
[What Happened Immediately After JFK Was Assassinated?](#)#80 of 243 [The Most Trustworthy Celebrities In The World](#)#554 of 2,753 [The Most Influential People of All Time](#)

- What age group are you in?

18-24  
25-29  
30-34  
35-39  
40-44  
45-49  
50-54  
55-59  
60-64  
65+  
434 participants

[Privacy policy](#)



Photo: Walmart / [flickr](#) / CC-BY 2.0

### **Alicia Keys**

On Alicia Keys' "Girl On Fire" album cover, she is standing in what may be an Illuminati symbol. She is also closely [associated with suspected Illuminati members](#) Jay-Z, Eminem and Beyoncé.

- **Born:** 1981-01-25
- **Birthplace:** Hell's Kitchen, New York City, New York, United States of America
- **Gender:** Female
- **Credits:** The Secret Life of Bees, Smokin' Aces, The Cosby Show

[More Alicia Keys](#)  
[The Best Songs Feat. Alicia Keys](#)#47 of 739 [The Best Singers Of All Time](#)#9 of 198 [The Greatest New Female Vocalists of the Past 10 Years](#)



Photo: Simon Davis/DFID / [Wikimedia Commons](#) / CC-BY 2.0

### **[Bill Gates](#)**

Bill Gates is arguably one of the most powerful men in the world. He is suspected of being a member of the Illuminati because his inventions have made it easier for every single person to be [tracked and manipulated](#). He has even suggested registering every new birth with finger prints.

- **Born:** 1955-10-28
- **Birthplace:** Seattle, Washington, United States of America
- **Gender:** Male
- **Credits:** The Triumph of the Nerds: The Rise of Accidental Empires, Freakonomics, Give Us the Money, The Billionaires' Pledge

[More Bill Gates](#)

[How Steve Jobs And Bill Gates Went From Friends To Bitter Enemies](#)#715 of 1,355 [The Greatest Minds of All Time](#)#139 of 344 [Famous Role Models We'd Like to Meet In Person](#)

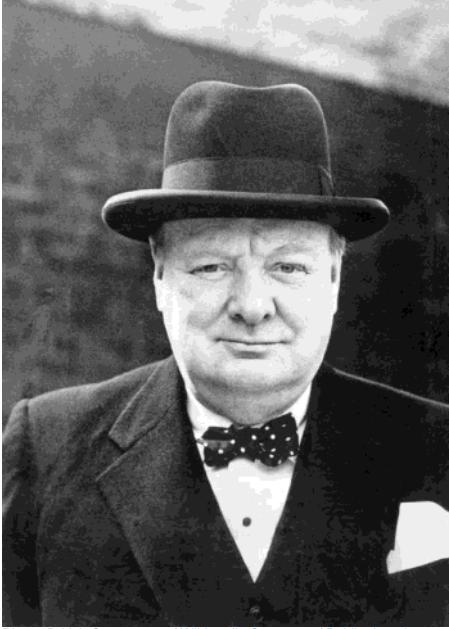


Photo: British Government / [Wikimedia Commons](#) / Public domain

### **[Winston Churchill](#)**

It has been alleged that Winston Churchill was [working with the Illuminati](#) throughout WWII. He is said to have been working for powerful bankers, rather than the people of England.

- **Born:** 1874-11-30
- **Birthplace:** Blenheim Palace, United Kingdom
- **Gender:** Male
- **Credits:** Young Winston, Churchill's People, The First World War, The Finest Hours

[More Winston Churchill](#)

[The 10 Most Devastating Burns Ever Delivered By Winston Churchill](#)#184 of 1,172 [The Best Writers of All Time](#)#262 of 753 [People We Wish Were Still Alive](#)



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### [Hillary Clinton](#)

Like her husband Bill Clinton, Hillary Rodham Clinton is allegedly [involved in the Illuminati](#). Besides being a very influential politician, she has also been seen wearing pins that depict Illuminati symbols.

- **Born:** 1947-10-26
- **Birthplace:** Chicago, Illinois, United States of America
- **Gender:** Female
- **Credits:** The Visible Vote '08- A Presidential Forum, By the People: The Election of Barack Obama, The War Room, First in the South Democratic Candidates Forum on MSNBC

[More Hillary Clinton](#)

[25 Things You Might Not Know About Hillary Rodham Clinton](#)#237 of 243 [The Most Trustworthy Celebrities In The World](#)#366 of 2,753 [The Most Influential People of All Time](#)



Photo: Soletron / [flickr](#) / CC-BY-ND 2.0

### [Lil Wayne](#)

Lil Wayne frequently uses [Illuminati symbols](#) and imagery in his music videos.

- **Born:** 1982-09-27
- **Birthplace:** New Orleans, Louisiana
- **Gender:** Male
- **Credits:** Fast & Furious 6, The Interview, The Wrestler, Magic Mike XXL

[More Lil Wayne](#)

[The Best Lil Wayne Songs of All Time](#)#12 of 70 [The Complete List of Rappers Who've Been in Prison](#)#9 of 238 [The Greatest Rappers Of All Time](#)



Photo: [@Eminem / Twitter](#)

## Eminem

Eminem has frequently incorporated Illuminati imagery into his album covers. He presented himself as a devil for his single ["Berzerk"](#) and he covered one eye on his cover of "Relapse."

- **Born:** 1972-10-17
- **Birthplace:** Saint Joseph, Missouri
- **Gender:** Male
- **Credits:** 8 Mile, 21 Jump Street, The Longest Yard, The Equalizer

[More Eminem](#)

[The Best Eminem Songs of All Time](#)[All The Ways 8 Mile Is Radically Different From Eminem's Actual Life](#)#236 of 264 [The Best \(Male\) Actors Working Today](#)



Photo: [hnnssy25 / flickr](#) / [CC-BY 2.0](#)

## Nicki Minaj

Nicki Minaj has incorporated [Illuminati symbols](#) and imagery into her music videos. She is especially fond of the "all seeing eye."

- **Born:** 1982-12-08
- **Birthplace:** Saint James, Trinidad and Tobago
- **Gender:** Female
- **Credits:** Ice Age: Continental Drift, Despicable Me 2, The Hangover Part II, Pitch Perfect

[More Nicki Minaj](#)

[The Best Nicki Minaj Songs](#)#46 of 198 [The Greatest New Female Vocalists of the Past 10 Years](#)#31 of 101 [The Best Current Female Singers](#)



Photo: [360b / Shutterstock](#)

## Bono

Bono is believed to be a [member of the Illuminati](#) because of his disproportionate access to powerful members of government. He has also been photographed displaying the "all seeing eye" and his band's name U2 could be a reference to the horned God Utu.

- **Born:** 1960-05-10
- **Birthplace:** Dublin, Republic of Ireland
- **Gender:** Male

- **Credits:** Batman Forever, Moulin Rouge!, Click, Brûlo

[More Bono](#)  
15 Fascinating Things You Didn't Know About Bono#193 of 243 [The Most Trustworthy Celebrities In The World](#)#28 of 227 [The Greatest Living Rock Songwriters](#)



[People Also Read](#) [How To Join The Illuminati](#)



Photo: [@algore / Instagram](#)

## Al Gore

Al Gore is rumored to be a member of the Illuminati. Many believe that his thoughts on global warming are an [Illuminati conspiracy](#).

- **Born:** 1948-03-31
- **Birthplace:** Washington, D.C., United States of America
- **Gender:** Male

**Credits:** An Inconvenient Truth, Saturday Night Live: Presidential Bash, A Terrifying Message from Al Gore, TED: The Future We Will Create

[More Al Gore](#)  
Al Gore-isms: Funny Al Gore Quotes#361 of 2,753 [The Most Influential People of All Time](#)#721 of 1,355 [The Greatest Minds of All Time](#)

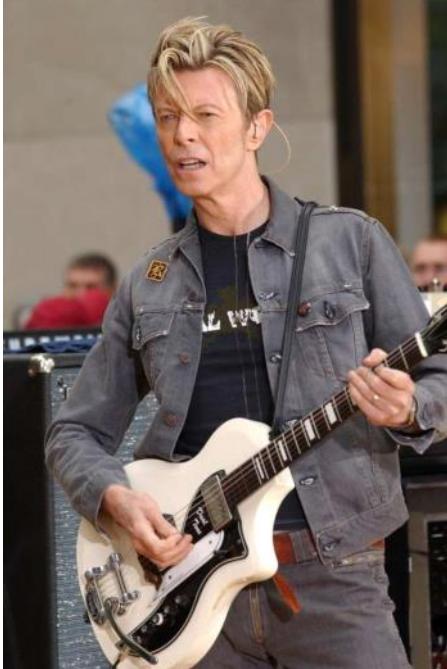


Photo: [JStone / Shutterstock](#)

## David Bowie

David Bowie has always incorporated Illuminati symbols into his visuals which accompany his music. He is also believed to be a member of the Ordo Templi Orientis, which dabble in the occult. Further evidence can be seen in Bowie's film *Labyrinth*, which depicts Bowie as having the [ability to administer mind control](#). Other Illuminati symbols can also be seen in the film.

- **Born:** 1947-01-08
- **Birthplace:** Brixton, London, United Kingdom
- **Gender:** Male

**Credits:** Labyrinth, Basquiat, The Hunger, The Man Who Fell to Earth

[More David Bowie](#)  
Fun Facts You Didn't Know About David Bowie#623 of 1,017 [The Best Actors In Film History](#)#18 of 739 [The Best Singers Of All Time](#)



Photo: Everett Collection / [Shutterstock](#)

### **LeBron James**

LeBron James has frequently been photographed displaying hand symbols [associated with the Illuminati](#). He is also very close to Jay-Z, who is considered to be an influential Illuminati member.

- **Born:** 1984-12-30
- **Birthplace:** Akron, Ohio, United States of America
- **Gender:** Male
- **Credits:** More Than A Game, 2015 NBA All Star All Style, Trainwreck, Late Show With David Letterman

[More LeBron James](#)

The Best LeBron 16 Colorways, Ranked#232 of 243 The Most Trustworthy Celebrities In The World#8 of 1,316 The Best Athletes Of All Time

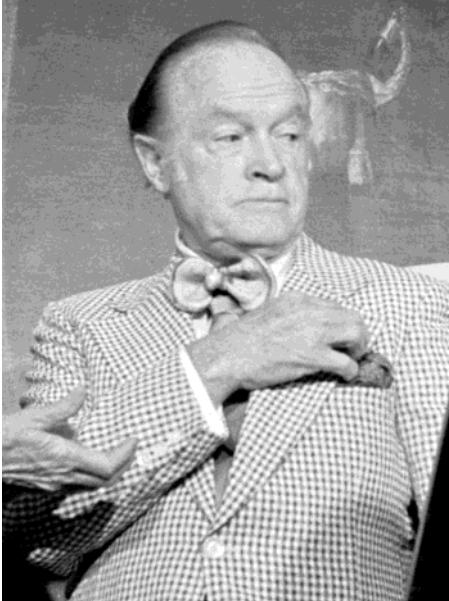


Photo: Trikosko, Marion S / [via Wikimedia Commons](#) / Public domain

### **Bob Hope**

It is believed that Bob Hope's [work with the USO](#) was an Illuminati mission to practice mind control to advance policies that were favorable to the Illuminati.

- **Born:** 1903-05-29
- **Birthplace:** Eltham, London, United Kingdom
- **Gender:** Male
- **Credits:** The Bob Hope Show, The 50th Annual Academy Awards, Bob Hope: The First 90 Years, The Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson

[More Bob Hope](#)

#119 of 220 The Greatest British Actors of All Time#140 of 219 The Greatest Actors Who Have Never Won An Oscar (For Acting)##37 of 339 The Funniest People Of All Time



Photo: [@diddy / Instagram](#)

### **[Sean Combs](#)**

Sean "P Diddy" Combs is [alleged to be a member of the Illuminati](#). Many believe that the Illuminati were involved in the deaths of both Biggie and Tupac. Biggie's death was rumored to be a sacrifice.

- **Born:** 1969-11-04
- **Birthplace:** New York City, New York
- **Gender:** Male

• **Credits:** Training Day, Bad Boys II, Godzilla, Muppets Most Wanted

[More Sean Combs](#)

[Things You Never Knew About Diddy](#)#7 of 70 [The Complete List of Rappers Who've Been in Prison](#)#134 of 238 [The Greatest Rappers Of All Time](#)



Photo: [AJ Guel / Wikimedia Commons / CC-BY 2.0](#)

### **[George H. W. Bush](#)**

George H.W. Bush is thought to be a very [prominent member of the Illuminati](#). He is also believed to have been involved with the Illuminati ordered assassination of John F. Kennedy.

- **Born:** 1924-06-12
- **Birthplace:** Milton, Massachusetts, United States of America
- **Gender:** Male

• **Credits:** Journeys with George, Being W, Pursuit of Equality, CBS News Special Report: Joint News Conference

[More George H. W. Bush](#)

#1202 of 2,753 [The Most Influential People of All Time](#)#17 of 45 [The Greatest U.S. Presidents Of All Time](#)#15 of 44 [Which US Presidents Do You Wish Were In Charge Right Now?](#)



Photo: [Helga Esteb / Shutterstock](#)

### **[Chris Brown](#)**

Chris Brown is believed to be involved with the Illuminati because he has a tattoo of a [devilish snake](#) with and "all seeing eye" inside a pyramid at the tip of its tail.

- **Born:** 1989-05-05
- **Birthplace:** Tappahannock, Virginia, United States of America
- **Gender:** Male

• **Credits:** Ted, The Bling Ring, Step Up, Rio 2

[More Chris Brown](#)

[The Best Songs Ft. Chris Brown](#)#164 of 284 [The Hottest Men Of 2021, Ranked](#)#260 of 904 [Celebrity Death Pool 2021](#)

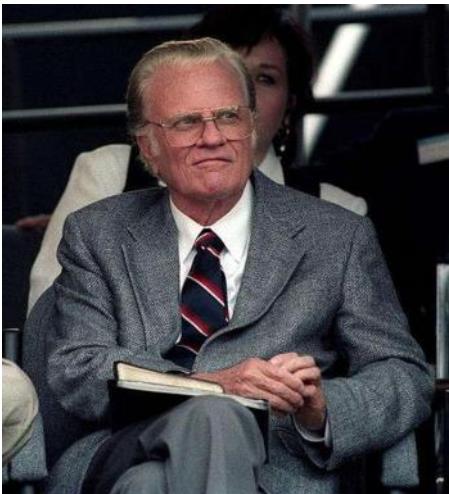


Photo: [Paul M. Walsh / Wikimedia Commons / CC BY 2.0](#)

### **[Billy Graham](#)**

It is believed that evangelist Billy Graham was using mind control on his ministry in order to [benefit the Illuminati](#).

- **Born:** 1918-11-07
- **Birthplace:** Charlotte, North Carolina, United States of America
- **Gender:** Male
- **Credits:** Born Again, Two a Penny, Come the Morning, The Homecoming, Shadow of the Boomerang

More [Billy Graham](#)

#588 of 1,355 [The Greatest Minds of All Time](#)#17 of 105 [The Most Influential Contemporary Americans](#)#124 of 416 [Celebrities Whose Deaths Will Be the Biggest Deal](#)



Photo: [Elias Goldensky / Wikipedia / Public Domain](#)

### **[Franklin D. Roosevelt](#)**

Franklin D. Roosevelt was a [member of the Freemasons](#) as well as the Illuminati. He is quoted as saying, "In politics, nothing happens by accident. If it happens, you can bet it was planned that way."

- **Born:** 1882-01-30
- **Birthplace:** Hyde Park, New York, United States of America
- **Gender:** Male
- **Credits:** Zeitgeist: The Movie, World War II in HD Colour, The President's Mystery, Fala: The President's Dog

More [Franklin D. Roosevelt](#)

[What Was Franklin And Eleanor Roosevelt's Relationship Really Like?](#)#4 of 44 [Which US Presidents Do You Wish Were In Charge Right Now?](#)#294 of 753 [People We Wish Were Still Alive](#)

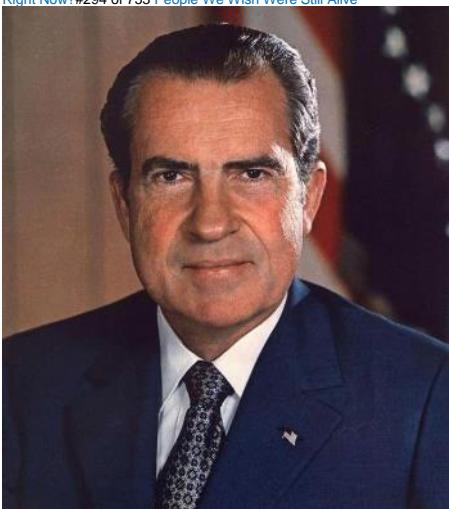


Photo: [Department of Defense / Wikimedia Commons / Public domain](#)

## **Richard Nixon**

Nixon was funded by the Rockefellers, an influential Illuminati family. When he stopped working for their best interest, they saw to it that he was [shamed out of office](#).

- **Born:** 1913-01-09
- **Birthplace:** Yorba Linda, California, United States of America
- **Gender:** Male
- **Credits:** All the President's Men, The Nixon Interviews

[More Richard Nixon](#)

[13 Little-Known Facts About Nixon That Prove He Was Way Weirder Than You Thought](#) #1173 of 2,753 [The Most Influential People of All Time](#) #35 of 45 [The Greatest U.S. Presidents Of All Time](#)



[People Also Read](#) [Everything You Didn't Know About The Origins Of The Illuminati](#)



Photo: [s\\_bukley / Shutterstock](#)

## **Whitney Houston**

It is believed that Whitney Houston was killed for a [blood sacrifice of the Illuminati](#).

- **Born:** 1963-08-09
- **Birthplace:** Newark, New Jersey, United States of America
- **Gender:** Female
- **Credits:** The Bodyguard, Cinderella, The Preacher's Wife, The Princess Diaries

[More Whitney Houston](#)

[The Best Whitney Houston Albums of All Time](#) #3 of 739 [The Best Singers Of All Time](#) #1 of 500 [The Best Female Vocalists Ever](#)

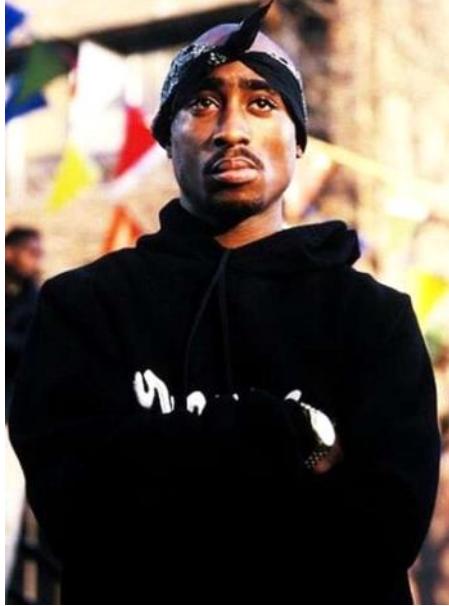


Photo: [Tupac Amaru Shakur / Flickr](#)

## **Tupac Shakur**

It is believed that Tupac Shakur [sold his soul](#) to the Illuminati in order to have success. Once he had a public outlet, Shakur was able to speak about anything he wanted, even if it did not align with the Illuminati's vision. Many believe that Tupac's death was both a sacrifice and a way to quiet his objections to the powers that be.

- **Born:** 1971-06-16
- **Birthplace:** East Harlem, New York City, New York, United States of America
- **Gender:** Male
- **Credits:** Django Unchained, Blood Diamond, Training Day, 8 Mile

[More Tupac Shakur](#)

[11 Conspiracy Theories About The Murder Of Tupac Shakur](#) #66 of 70 [The Complete List of Rappers Who've Been in Prison](#) #1 of 238 [The Greatest Rappers Of All Time](#)

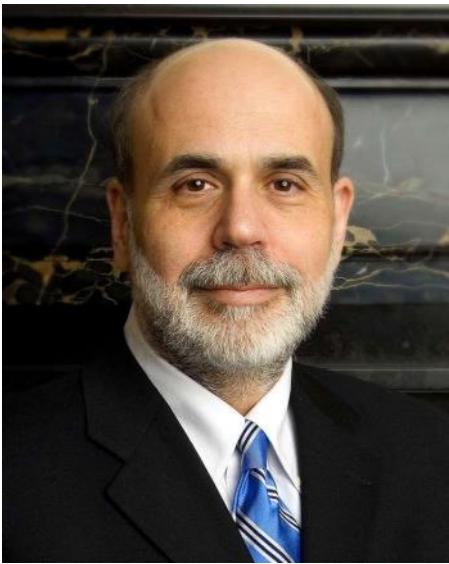


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### **[Ben Bernanke](#)**

Ben Bernanke is believed to be in the Illuminati and his [work in urging the government](#) to bail out big banks is said to be the work of the Illuminati.

- **Born:** 1953-12-13
- **Birthplace:** Augusta, Georgia, United States of America
- **Gender:** Male
- **Credits:** American Casino, 60 Minutes, The Bubble, The Late Show with Stephen Colbert



Photo: Rob Crandall / [Shutterstock](#)

### **[Alan Greenspan](#)**

It is rumored that Alan Greenspan is an influential member of the Illuminati and he actually [assisted in creating several financial collapses](#), which directly benefited the world's richest businessmen.

- **Born:** 1926-03-06
- **Birthplace:** Manhattan, New York City, New York, United States of America
- **Gender:** Male
- **Credits:** Who Is Cenk Uygur?, I.O.U.S.A., The Young Turks, The Men Who Built America

[More Alan Greenspan](#)

#26 of 904 [Celebrity Death Pool 2021](#)#82 of 105 [The Most Influential Contemporary Americans](#)#3 of 92 [Famous Only Children](#)



Photo: Jamie Roach / [Shutterstock](#)

## Charles, Prince of Wales

The Rothschilds are one of the most [prominent families involved in the Illuminati](#). It is alleged that Prince Charles works directly for the Rothschilds and always promotes what is in their best interest.

- **Born:** 1948-11-14
- **Birthplace:** Buckingham Palace, London, England
- **Gender:** Male

• **Credits:** Symphony for the Spine, The Royal Wedding, A Queen Is Crowned, The Royal Variety Performance 2002

[More Charles, Prince of Wales](#)

[What Charles And Diana's Relationship Was Actually Like](#)#1607 of 2,753 [The Most Influential People of All Time](#)#

176 of 904 [Celebrity Death Pool](#) 2021



Photo: Arnold Newman, White House Press Office (WHPO) / [Wikimedia Commons](#) / [Public domain](#)

## Lyndon B. Johnson

Lyndon Johnson is allegedly a member of the Illuminati and many suspect that he had [direct involvement](#) with the assassination of his predecessor John F. Kennedy.

- **Born:** 1908-08-27
- **Birthplace:** Stonewall, Texas, United States of America
- **Gender:** Male

• **Credits:** We Were Soldiers, LBJ, The Sixties

[More Lyndon B. Johnson](#)

[How LBJ Ushered In Our Current Era Of Dirty Politics And Attack Ads](#)#23 of 45 [The Greatest U.S. Presidents Of All Time](#)#

22 of 44 [Which US Presidents Do You Wish Were In Charge Right Now?](#)



Photo: Rob Crandall / [Shutterstock](#)

## Ted Kennedy

The Kennedys are believed to be one of the [top families](#) involved with the Illuminati. Ted Kennedy is believed to practice mind control.

- **Born:** 1932-02-22
- **Birthplace:** Boston, Massachusetts, United States of America
- **Gender:** Male

• **Credits:** Brothers on the Line, John Ashcroft Hearings, Follow the Leader, Future Flight

[More Ted Kennedy](#)

[The True Story of Ted Kennedy's Manslaughter Is Even More Messed Up Than Hollywood Will Show You](#)#316 of 347 [The Most Important Leaders In World History](#)#187 of 302 [The Most Influential Politicians in American History](#)





Photo: [Kiefer / Wikimedia Commons / CC-BY-SA 2.0](#)

### **[Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh](#)**

Prince Philip is believed to be an [influential member of the Illuminati](#) who practices mind control on his subjects.

- **Born:** 1921-06-10
- **Birthplace:** Mon Repos, Corfu
- **Gender:** Male
- **Credits:** Good Neighbors

[More Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh](#)

How A Divorce Scandal Led To Queen Elizabeth II Giving Her Husband A Royal Title#9 of 13 Times Protocol Was Broken During

Royal Funerals#5 of 31 Every Person Who Married Into The Royal Family In The Last Century, Ranked



Photo: David Hume Kennerly / [Wikimedia Commons / Public Domain](#)

### **[Gerald Ford](#)**

Gerald Ford was believed to have been working in the [Illuminati's best interest](#) when he brokered a deal that allowed Iran to purchase the necessary tools in order to produce plutonium.

- **Born:** 1913-07-14
- **Birthplace:** Omaha, Nebraska, United States of America
- **Gender:** Male
- **Credits:** All the President's Men, The Bees

[More Gerald Ford](#)

The Best Gerald Ford Quotes#26 of 45 [The Greatest U.S. Presidents Of All Time](#)#23 of 44 [Which US Presidents Do You Wish Were In Charge Right Now?](#)



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### **[Henry Kissinger](#)**

Henry Kissinger is believed to be a top official in the Illuminati. He works for the direct benefit of the [New World Order](#).

- **Born:** 1923-05-27
- **Birthplace:** Fürth, Germany
- **Gender:** Male
- **Credits:** Last Days in Vietnam, Bobby Fischer Against the World, Back Door Channels: The Price of Peace, The Making of Superman II

[More Henry Kissinger](#)



People Also Read [The 13 Main Families of the Illuminati](#)

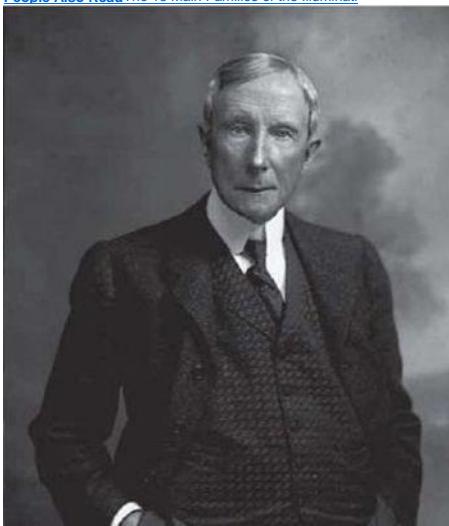


Photo: [Alvaro77777 / Wikimedia Commons](#) / CC-BY-SA 4.0

### John D. Rockefeller

John D. Rockefeller was the head of the Rockefeller family who are one of the most influential families in the Illuminati. He was [quoted as saying](#), "In our dreams, people yield themselves with perfect docility to our molding hands. The present education conventions of intellectual and character education fade from their minds, and, unhampered by tradition, we work our own good will upon a grateful and responsive folk. We shall not try to make these people, or any of their children, into philosophers, or men of science. We have not to raise up from them authors, educators, poets or men of letters. We shall not search for great artists, painters, musicians nor lawyers, doctors, preachers, politicians, statesmen -- of whom we have an ample supply. The task is simple. We will organize children and teach them in a perfect way the things their fathers and mothers are doing in an imperfect way."

- **Born:** 1839-07-08
- **Birthplace:** Richford, New York
- **Gender:** Male

[More John D. Rockefeller](#)

The Best John D. Rockefeller Quotes #547 of 2,753 The Most Influential People of All Time #980 of 1,355 The Greatest Minds of All Time



Photo: [The Official CTBTO Photostream / Wikimedia Commons](#) / CC-BY 2.0

### Mikhail Gorbachev

It is alleged that Mikhail Gorbachev was working directly with Ronald Reagan to [promote the New World Order](#).

- **Born:** 1931-03-02
- **Birthplace:** Privolnoye, Krasnogvardeysky District, Stavropol Krai
- **Gender:** Male
- **Credits:** Faraway, So Close!, Here to Stay, Svoboda po russki, The 11th Hour

[More Mikhail Gorbachev](#)

#62 of 904 [Celebrity Death Pool 2021](#) #173 of 347 The Most Important Leaders In World History #5 of 63 The Most Influential People of the Cold War



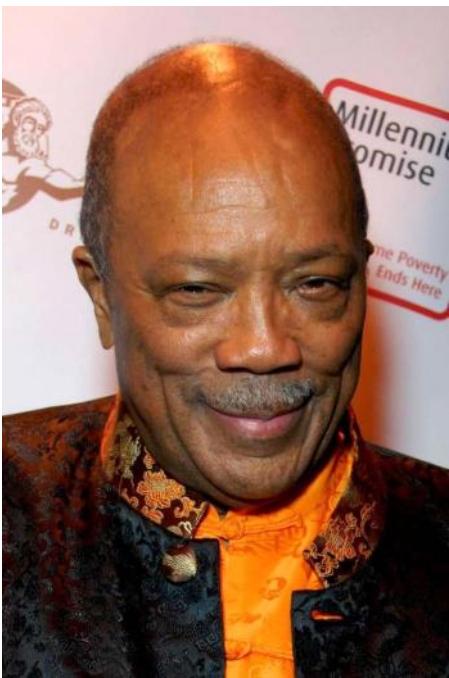


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### [Quincy Jones](#)

Quincy Jones is rumored to be an influential member of the Illuminati and he has helped many musicians get exposure. Allegedly, Jones [makes emerging artists participate](#) in Illuminati rituals before he will help propel them into successful artists.

- **Born:** 1933-03-14
- **Birthplace:** Chicago, Illinois, United States of America
- **Gender:** Male
- **Credits:** The Color Purple, The Pawnbroker, In the Heat of the Night, Michael Jackson: Thriller

[More Quincy Jones](#)

[The Best Quincy Jones Albums of All Time](#)#1409 of 2,753 [The Most Influential People of All Time](#)#186 of 904 [Celebrity Death Pool](#)  
2021



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### [Kris Kristofferson](#)

Kris Kristofferson is rumored to not only be [a member of the Illuminati](#), but he is also suspected of being a drug-runner for the CIA.

- **Born:** 1936-06-22
- **Birthplace:** Brownsville, Texas, United States of America
- **Gender:** Male
- **Credits:** Blade II, Blade, Blade: Trinity, Watchmen

[More Kris Kristofferson](#)

[The Best Kris Kristofferson Songs](#)#30 of 227 [The Greatest Living Rock Songwriters](#)#195 of 361 [Musicians Who Belong In The Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame](#)





Photo: [Justin Davis / Wikimedia Commons / CC-BY-SA 2.0](#)

### **Dr. Dre**

Dr. Dre has frequently rapped about [selling his soul to make it in hip-hop](#). He is also quoted as saying that Illuminati member Quincy Jones is his mentor and his ad campaign for his Beats by Dre headphones was filled with Illuminati imagery.

- **Born:** 1965-02-18
- **Birthplace:** Compton, California, United States of America
- **Gender:** Male
- **Credits:** Training Day, Bridesmaids, This Is the End, Grand Theft Auto V  
[More Dr. Dre](#)

The Best Songs on Dr. Dre's [The Chronic](#)#5 of 238 The Greatest Rappers Of All Time#415 of 1,891 [The Greatest Musical Artists of All Time](#)



Photo: [Julian Calder / Wikimedia Commons / CC-BY-SA 4.0](#)

### **Elizabeth II**

The Royal Family are [believed to be very involved with the Illuminati](#) and the recent Diamond Jubilee was actually an Illuminati ritual.

- **Born:** 1926-04-21
- **Birthplace:** Mayfair, London, London, England
- **Gender:** Female
- **Credits:** Royal Heritage, Monarchy: The Royal Family at Work  
[More Elizabeth II](#)

Inside Queen Elizabeth II's Private LifeHere's Exactly What Will Go Down When Queen Elizabeth II Passes#744 of 1,355 [The Greatest Minds of All Time](#)



Photo: JStone / Shutterstock

### **Celine Dion**

Celine Dion has frequently [presented images of herself](#) in which she is covering one eye, revealing the Illuminati symbol of the "all seeing eye."

- **Born:** 1968-03-30
- **Birthplace:** Charlemagne, Canada
- **Gender:** Female
- **Credits:** Titanic, Beauty and the Beast, Sleepless in Seattle, Céline Dion: All the Way... A Decade of Song & Video

More [Celine Dion](#)

[The Best Celine Dion Songs](#)#159 of 243 [The Most Trustworthy Celebrities In The World](#)#9 of 739 [The Best Singers Of All Time](#)



Photo: Roosewelt Pinheiro/ABr / [via Wikimedia Commons](#) / CC BY 3.0 br

### **Prince Andrew, Duke of York**

Prince Andrew is [believed to work](#) with the Royal Family's goal of promoting the Illuminati's agenda.

- **Born:** 1960-02-19
- **Birthplace:** Buckingham Palace, London, England
- **Gender:** Male
- **More** [Prince Andrew, Duke of York](#)

#141 of 143 [Celebrities Who Are Great To Sit Next To On A Long Flight](#)#9 of 13 [How The Issue Of Divorce Has Quietly Dominated Queen Elizabeth II's Reign](#)#12 of 12 [What Every Living British Royal Does Today](#)



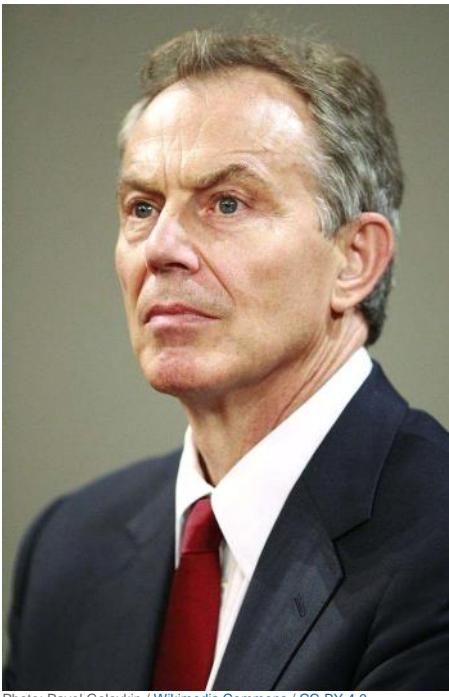


Photo: Pavel Golovkin / [Wikimedia Commons](#) / CC-BY 4.0

### **Tony Blair**

Tony Blair is believed to be a member of the Illuminati because he [promotes elite agendas](#) as he tries to control the masses.

- **Born:** 1953-05-06
- **Birthplace:** Edinburgh, United Kingdom
- **Gender:** Male
- **Credits:** CBS News Special Report: Joint News Conference, The Class of 92, Sir David Frost: That Was the Life That Was, Countdown to Zero

[More Tony Blair](#)  
#2503 of 2,753 The Most Influential People of All Time #1333 of 1,355 The Greatest Minds of All Time #20 of 48 The Best Political Nicknames



Photo: [Metaweb \(FB\)](#) / Public domain

### **Andrew W. Mellon**

Former U.S. Treasury Chairman Andrew W. Mellon got his [influential position](#) so that he could promote the agenda of the Illuminati.

- **Born:** 1855-03-24
- **Birthplace:** Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, United States of America
- **Gender:** Male



[People Also Read](#) Celebrities Going Off About The Illuminati On Video



Photo: Ovidiu Hrubaru / [Shutterstock](#)

### [Aretha Franklin](#)

Aretha Franklin has been photographed displaying the Illuminati diamond symbol with her hands. It is rumored that she was not invited to Whitney Houston's funeral because of her [association with the Illuminati](#) who are believed to have murdered Houston as a sacrifice.

- **Born:** 1942-03-25
- **Birthplace:** Memphis, Tennessee, United States of America
- **Gender:** Female
- **Credits:** The Blues Brothers, Forrest Gump, Goodfellas, The Last King of Scotland

More [Aretha Franklin](#)

[The Best Aretha Franklin Albums of All Time](#)#55 of 162 [1970s Christian Pop Artists](#)#2 of 500 [The Best Female Vocalists Ever](#)



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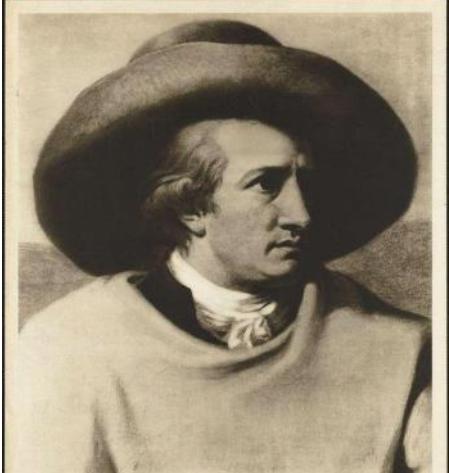
### [Lionel Richie](#)

Lionel Richie has been [promoting](#) the "all seeing eye" long before it was popular.

- **Born:** 1949-06-20
- **Birthplace:** Tuskegee, Alabama, United States of America
- **Gender:** Male
- **Credits:** Rio, The 40-Year-Old Virgin, Happy Gilmore, The Wedding Singer

More [Lionel Richie](#)

[The Best Lionel Richie Albums of All Time](#)#115 of 243 [The Most Trustworthy Celebrities In The World](#)#52 of 739 [The Best Singers Of All Time](#)



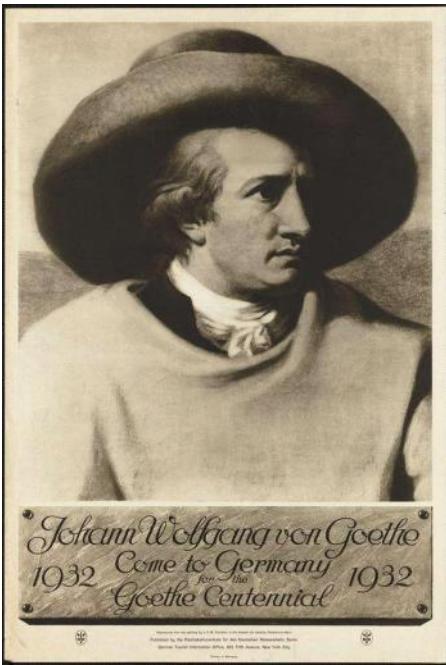


Photo: Boston Public Library / [flickr](#) / CC-BY-NC-ND 2.0

### **Johann Wolfgang von Goethe**

Writer Johann Wolfgang von Goethe was [involved with the Bavarian Illuminati](#).

- **Born:** 1749-08-28
- **Birthplace:** Free City of Frankfurt
- **Gender:** Male
- **Credits:** Faust, Faust, Lesson Faust, Wrong Move

More [Johann Wolfgang von Goethe](#)  
#94 of 753 [People We Wish Were Still Alive](#)#411 of 2,753 [The Most Influential People of All Time](#)#34 of 1,355 [The Greatest Minds of All Time](#)



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### **Mary Astor**

Actress Mary Astor is a [descendant of the Astor family](#), who are believed to be one of the most influential families associated with the Illuminati.

- **Born:** 1906-05-03
- **Birthplace:** Quincy, Illinois, United States of America
- **Gender:** Female
- **Credits:** The Maltese Falcon, Meet Me in St. Louis, The Palm Beach Story, Hush... Hush, Sweet Charlotte

More [Mary Astor](#)  
#220 of 349 [The Best Actresses In Film History](#)#56 of 113 [The Worst Oscar-Winning Actors Ever](#)#145 of 212 [200+ Celebrities Who Went to Rehab](#)



Photo: [Wikimedia Commons / Public domain](#)

### **William F. Buckley, Jr.**

Author William F. Buckley Jr. was believed to be a leader in [Illuminati mind control](#).

- **Born:** 1925-11-24
- **Birthplace:** New York City, New York, United States of America
- **Gender:** Male
- **Credits:** Buy the Ticket, Take the Ride, Celestial Navigation Simplified, Firing Line  
More [William F. Buckley, Jr.](#)

#2052 of 2,753 The Most Influential People of All Time#143 of 158 The Most Ridiculous Political Pundits#82 of 97 Historical Figures You Most Want to Bring Back from the Dead



Photo: GuyStairSanity / [Wikimedia Commons / Public domain](#)

### **Princess Anne, Duchess of Calabria**

Princess Anne, Duchess of Calabria works with the Royal Family to [promote the agenda](#) of the Illuminati.

- **Born:** 1938-12-04
- **Birthplace:** Woluwe-Saint-Pierre, Belgium
- **Gender:** Female



Photo: Fritz Cohen (Israel National Photo Collection) / [via Wikimedia Commons / Public domain](#)

### **Guy de Rothschild**

Businessman Guy de Rothschild is a member of the [Rothschild bloodline](#) which is a very prominent family in the Illuminati.

- **Born:** 1909-05-21
- **Birthplace:** Paris, France
- **Gender:** Male



Photo: Government of Rhodesia / [Wikimedia Commons / Public domain](#)

### **[Clifford Dupont](#)**

Clifford Dupont is a member of the Dupont family who are one of the most influential families of the Illuminati.

- **Born:** 1905-12-06
- **Birthplace:** London, United Kingdom
- **Gender:** Male



Photo: [Main Street Records And Tapes](#)

### **[Boxcar Willie](#)**

Musician Boxcar Willie is [believed to be proficient](#) in Illuminati mind control. He allegedly could make women have sex with him and then manipulate them to forget that the event ever happened.

- **Born:** 1931-09-01
- **Birthplace:** Ovilla, Texas, United States of America
- **Gender:** Male
- **Credits:** The Singing Cowboys, A Place to Grow

[More Boxcar Willie](#)

#1851 of 1,891 The Greatest Musical Artists of All Time#6 of 100 The Best Musical Artists From Nebraska#7 of 50 The Best

Country Singers From Missouri



Photo: [Wikimedia Commons](#) / Public domain

### **Adam Weishaupt**

Adam Weishaupt is the [founder of the Bavarian Illuminati](#).

- **Born:** 1748-02-06
- **Birthplace:** Ingolstadt, Germany
- **Gender:** Male

[Frequently voted on Secret Societies From History You'd Most Want to Infiltrate](#)



Photo: mike bouchard / [flickr](#) / CC-BY-NC-ND 2.0

### **Cypress Hill**

Rap group Cypress Hill released a music video with reptilian shape shifters which are [associated with the Illuminati](#).

- **Credits:** The Wolf of Wall Street, Training Day, Zero Dark Thirty, Fast & Furious 6
- **More Cypress Hill**

[The Best Cypress Hill Albums of All Time](#) #58 of 383 The Greatest Musical Artists of the '90s #860 of 1,019 The Worst Bands &

[Musicians of All Time](#)

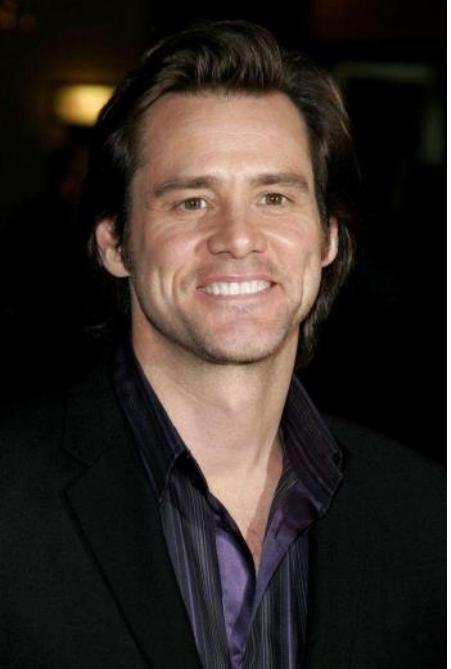


Photo: Tinseltown / [Shutterstock](#)

### **Jim Carrey**

Jim Carrey is believed to be in the Illuminati. He even [poked fun at the group](#) in a skit on "In Living Color."

- **Born:** 1962-01-17
- **Birthplace:** Newmarket, Canada
- **Gender:** Male

- **Credits:** Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind, The Truman Show, Ace Ventura: Pet Detective, Dumb & Dumber
- **More Jim Carrey**
- Fans Share Theories About Jim Carrey Movie That Are Wild Enough To Be True#55 of 264 The Best (Male) Actors Working Today#196 of 243 The Most Trustworthy Celebrities In The World



Photo: [@blueivy.carter / Instagram](#)

### **Blue Ivy Carter**

Jay-Z and Beyoncé are both [associated with the Illuminati](#), so it is no surprise that their daughter is also suspected of being a member. There is also a rumor going around that the name Blue Ivy backwards references the spawn of Satan.

- **Born:** 2012-01-07
- **Birthplace:** Upper East Side, New York City, New York
- **Gender:** Female



Photo: carrie-nelson / [Shutterstock](#)

### **Skyler Gordy & LMFAO**

LMFAO promote Illuminati symbolism and imagery in their [live performances](#).

- **Born:** 1986-08-23
- **Gender:** Male

From <<https://www.ranker.com/list/famous-alleged-illuminati-members/user-x>>

# Martinism

Saturday, May 29, 2021 6:18 PM

**Martinism** is a form of [Christian mysticism](#) and [esoteric Christianity](#) concerned with the fall of the first man, his state of material privation from his divine source, and the process of his return, called 'Reintegration' or illumination.

As a mystical tradition, it was first transmitted through a Masonic high-degree system established around 1740 in France by [Martinez de Pasqually](#), and later propagated in different forms by his two students [Louis Claude de Saint-Martin](#) and [Jean-Baptiste Willermoz](#).

The term *Martinism* applies to both this particular doctrine and the teachings of the reorganized "Martinist Order" founded in 1886 by [Augustin Chaboseau](#) and [Gérard Encausse](#) (aka [Papus](#)). It was not used at the tradition's inception in the 18th century. This confusing disambiguation has been a problem since the late 18th century, where the term *Martinism* was already used interchangeably between the teachings of [Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin](#) and [Martinez de Pasqually](#), and the works of the first being attributed to the latter.<sup>14</sup> Regular transmission of Martinism to Augustin Chaboseau and Gérard Encausse has yet to be documented.

From <<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martinism>>



## Martinist History

### **Louis Claude de Saint-Martin**

The writings of Louis Claude de Saint-Martin and Martinès de Pasqually form the foundations of the Martinist Teachings. The story of these two great mystics begins in the early eighteenth century. In the midst of the great political and economic unrest leading to the French Revolution, France paused to listen to a debonair, inspiring, mysterious man who awed both the nobility and the people with the high level of mysticism contained in his published writings. This author signed his books "The Unknown Philosopher." Where did his great understanding come from? He could have been easily mistaken for a Sophist, yet he possessed the gentleness and profound understanding of a philanthropist.



This person was Louis Claude de Saint-Martin. He dared to invade the salons of the wealthy aristocrats to challenge their jaded interests with inspiring discourses. He allowed himself to become the idol of French society with but one purpose—to draw their minds away from their meaningless, self-indulgent existence to contemplate humanity's true position in the universe. He wished them to comprehend the natural connection existing between the Divine, humanity, and the universe, and to be conscious of the special place we once occupied in our original state and what happened to us during the course of time. Above all, he wanted them to learn how to regain this glorious former state.

The published writings of Louis Claude de Saint-Martin were read in France, Germany, England, and even in Russia. The knowledge that he imparted became known under the name of Martinism. This great teacher refused to take credit for what he taught, however, instead paying tribute to his initiators. To those who were worthy, he divulged the secret of a higher knowledge they could access. To attain it, they had to transform themselves, and their preparation was through initiation.

### **Martinès de Pasqually**

The person to whom Louis Claude de Saint-Martin gave credit for his teachings was Martinès de Pasqually, a powerful mystic, adept, and theurgist of the eighteenth century. Tradition indicates he was well versed in the secret wisdom embodied in the esoteric teachings of Egypt, Greece, and the East. Shortly after 1760, Pasqually went to Bordeaux and established the headquarters for his order, The Masonic Élus-Cohen Knights of the Universe.

Saint-Martin, then an officer in the French Army, learned that one of his fellow officers was a member of this Order of the Élus-Cohens (Elect Priests). Through this friend, Saint-Martin met with the Supreme Master of the Order, Martinès de Pasqually, and was immediately captivated by the man's goals and teachings.

After due preparation and demonstration of his worthiness, Saint-Martin was initiated into the Order of the Élus-Cohens in the year 1765, at age 22. He eventually attained the highest degree of that Order, that of Réau - Croix. However, Saint-Martin was not entirely won over by Pasqually's methods, which called for theurgic rites, complicated ceremonies concerned with perceivable manifestations. Saint-Martin often asked Pasqually, "Master, is all that necessary in order to know the Divine?"

In 1772, personal matters compelled Pasqually to leave France for Port-au-Prince, Haiti, where he died in 1774. Without its founder, the Order progressively fell dormant. His two ablest disciples were Saint-Martin and Jean-Baptiste Willermoz. Willermoz joined with some members of the Élus-Cohens and the Order of the Strict German Templar Observance. They reorganized themselves by adopting part of the theoretical teachings of Martinès de Pasqually to create an order called "The Charitable Knights of the Holy City." Others joined this Order, but Saint-Martin, seeing that they were not so much seeking the truth as the Philosopher's Stone, chose to follow an independent path.

### **Jakob Boehme**

Saint-Martin traveled to England, Italy, and Germany to study humanity and nature and to compare the findings of others with his own. It was in Strasbourg, a city in northeast France, that he became acquainted with the works of Jakob Boehme (1575–1624), which revolutionized his whole mystical life. Jakob Boehme became for Saint-Martin his "second teacher."

*In order to read Boehme's texts in their original language, Saint-Martin learned German at the age of forty-five. Through a study of Boehme, he realized that true initiation surpasses theurgic rituals; there is no need to call upon intermediary powers of creation through complex and often dangerous ceremonies. Initiation can only be produced with the heart. This is what is called "The Way of the Heart."*

From this point until the end of his life, Saint-Martin made a daily task of translating the texts of Jakob Boehme. "I owe my entry into the higher truths to Martinès de Pasqually, and I owe the most important steps I have made into these truths to Jakob Boehme."

## The Writings of Louis Claude de Saint-Martin

Saint-Martin published his first work in 1775 under the title *Of Errors and Of Truth, or Humanity Recalled to the Universal Principle of Science*. The book's purpose was to combat the atheism of his time. As with all his other writings, this was published under the pseudonym of "The Unknown Philosopher."

During the many years of his literary activity, Louis Claude de Saint-Martin wrote numerous works, including *The Natural View of the Connections Existing Between the Divine, Humanity, and the Universe*; *The Person of Desire*; *The New Person*; *The Spirit of Things*; and *The Ministry of the Human-Spirit*. He also left to posterity a revealing and inspiring personal correspondence, as well as a few posthumous works. In addition, he published translations of the writings of the one he called his "most dear B" (Jakob Boehme): *The Birth of Dawn*; *The Three Principles of the Divine Essence*; *Forty Questions on the Soul*; *The Triple Life of Humanity*; and *Six Points and Nine Texts*.

## Society of Intimates

The philosophical works of Louis Claude de Saint-Martin aroused much interest. In order to study his teachings, a circle of disciples was formed, known by the name of Society of Intimates. This society was working for the purest forms of spirituality. Saint-Martin accepted very few men and women into his society, always exercising extreme prudence.

Despite the political and social turbulence of the French Revolution, Louis Claude de Saint-Martin was never seriously harassed during the Reign of Terror, or at any other time during the Revolution. On October 13, 1803, at the age of sixty, Louis Claude de Saint-Martin went through transition following a stroke.



Following Louis Claude de Saint-Martin's death, the Martinist disciples were not very active. The traditional teachings and ceremonies were privately transmitted by groups of initiators, spreading principally throughout Italy, Germany, and France.

## The Martinist Order

After a long period of secrecy, a great effort was undertaken in 1888 to restructure Martinism into an initiatic order. It is due to the efforts of Dr. Gérard Encausse (Papus) and Augustin Chaboseau that this order survived and took on the name Martinist Order. Their efforts were rewarded with success in 1891 with the formation of a Supreme Council of the Martinist Order, consisting of twenty-one members with authority over all the lodges in the world. Papus, a well-known French esotericist, was elected the first President of the Supreme Council. Under his brilliant and tireless direction, the Order grew rapidly, and by 1900, it could account for several hundred members in most parts of the world.

*Papus soon became an authority on Martinism, and his works constitute a precious source of information for Martinists and all those interested in the tradition.*

World War I (1914–1918) greatly affected the growth and activities of the Order. Papus died heroically carrying out his duties as a medical doctor, and many other leaders and members of the Order did not survive. It was finally revived in 1931 due to the efforts of Augustin Chaboseau, the co-founder of the Martinist Order with Papus. He, along with the two other remaining survivors of the 1891 Supreme Council, created the Traditional Martinist Order to distinguish it from several movements which wrongly claimed to be the successors of Papus. Augustin Chaboseau, who was a descendant of an uninterrupted filiation back to Louis Claude de Saint-Martin, served as Grand Master and President of the Supreme Council until his transition on January 2, 1946.

## The Traditional Martinist Order

Ralph Maxwell Lewis, Imperator of the Ancient and Mystical Order Rosae Crucis, was received into the Traditional Martinist Order on September 1, 1939. His Initiator was Georges Lagrèze, legate and representative of Augustin Chaboseau. Consequently, the charters, manifestos, and all other documents needed for the promotion and development of Martinism in the Americas were transmitted to Ralph M. Lewis just prior to the oppression which the Traditional Martinist Order had to endure in Europe during the Second World War.

Currently, the Supreme Council of the Traditional Martinist Order is directed and presided over by the Sovereign Grand Master, Claudio Mazzucco, Imperator of the Rosicrucian Order, AMORC. The Traditional Martinist Order goes back through an initiatic transmission that is absolutely authentic, to the purest sources of Martinism. Thus, the Martinist light has been able to shine and spread, without interruption, its original luster.

From <<https://www.martinists.org/history>>

## Obscurantism

Saturday, May 29, 2021 8:50 PM

**Obscurantism and Obscurationism** ([/ob'skjüərən t̬zəm.əb-/](#) or [/obsküər'əntzəm/](#))<sup>[1]</sup> describe the practice of deliberately presenting information in an imprecise, **abstruse** manner designed to limit further inquiry and understanding.<sup>[2]</sup> There are two historical and intellectual denotations of **Obscurantism**: (1) the deliberate restriction of knowledge—opposition to disseminating **knowledge**<sup>[3]</sup> and (2) deliberate obscurity—a **recondite literary** or artistic style, characterized by deliberate vagueness.<sup>[4]</sup>

The term **obscurantism** derives from the title of the 16th-century satire *Epistola Obscurorum Virorum* (*Letters of Obscure Men*, 1515–19), that was based upon the **intellectual** dispute between the German humanist **Johann Reuchlin** and the monk **Johannes Pfefferkorn** of the **Dominican Order**, about whether or not all **Jewish** books should be **burned** as un-Christian heresy.<sup>[5]</sup> Earlier, in 1509, the monk Pfefferkorn had obtained permission from **Maximilian I, Holy Roman Emperor** (1486–1519), to burn all copies of the **Talmud** (**Jewish law** and **Jewish ethics**) known to be in the **Holy Roman Empire** (AD 926–1806); the *Letters of Obscure Men* satirized the Dominican arguments for burning "un-Christian" works. In the 18th century, **Enlightenment** philosophers applied the term **obscurantist** to any enemy of intellectual enlightenment and the liberal diffusion of knowledge. In the 19th century, in distinguishing the varieties of obscurantism found in **metaphysics** and **theology** from the "more subtle" obscurantism of the **critical philosophy of Immanuel Kant**, and of modern **philosophical skepticism**, **Friedrich Nietzsche** said: "The essential element in the black art of obscurantism is not that it wants to darken individual understanding, but that it wants to blacken our picture of the world, and darken our idea of existence."<sup>[6]</sup>

From <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Obscurantism>

## obscurantism

### noun

ob·scu·ran·tism | \ əb-skjüər-ən-ti-zəm , əb-; , əb-skjü-ən-tən- \

#### Definition of **obscurantism**

- 1: opposition to the spread of knowledge : a policy of withholding knowledge from the general public
- 2a: a style (as in literature or art) characterized by deliberate vagueness or abstruseness
- 2b: an act or instance of obscurantism

From <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/obscurantism>

## Obscurantism & The Language of Excess

### Siobhan Lyons tries not to use either to explain what and why they are.

As a schoolgirl in a Catholic Primary School, I often had to attend church. In W. Somerset Maugham's *Of Human Bondage*, the protagonist Philip Carey assumes that the greater one suffers with discomfort in prayer, the more in favour one will be with God. This would explain not only the religious habit of self-flagellation, but also why church pews are notoriously uncomfortable. Attending an academic conference recently, I was confronted with similar discomfort in the lecture hall, whose seats remarkably resembled church pews in both look and feel. The speaker, although he may have been discussing something of interest, nonetheless appeared to me as a priest whose words echoed in a tone mundane to the point that any interest was obliterated. As with my early days in church, there was a distinct theme of reverence floating through the room, but distastefully; an empty reverence thought that tends to cannibalise itself in vicious scholarly circles. Students are the members of this church, while the priests are the exalted lecturers who pontificate theories that often have no bearing on reality in any coherent, concrete sense. And these clerics deal in a language marked by **obscurantism** – the darkening or purposeful withholding of knowledge, or communicating in a purposefully complicated manner – as have many philosophers historically. So, although Marx criticised German Idealism for being obscure, Marx himself has continuously been accused of writing obscurely; as have Kant, Hegel, Wittgenstein, Heidegger, and perhaps most notoriously, Derrida.

### The Uses of Obscurity

Politically speaking, various philosophers have linked obscurantism with the ability to govern a society. This link is firstfamously described in *The Republic* (c.380 BC), in which Plato advocates what he calls the 'Noble Lie', a falsehood fed into society for the greater good. Friedrich Nietzsche was more critical of obscurity and obscurantists, arguing, "The essential element in the black art of obscurantism is not that it wants to darken individual understanding, but that it wants to blacken our picture of the world, and darken our idea of existence." (*Human, All Too Human*, p.220, 1878). Yet while Nietzsche saw obscurantism as something that thwarted 'the enlightenment of the mind' (p.121), he nevertheless saw something in it, claiming, "sometimes, however, it employs the opposite means and seeks through the highest refinement of the intellect to induce a satiation with its fruits" (*ibid*). Nietzsche called this 'refined obscurantism' and ascribed it to Immanuel Kant's notoriously difficult writing, praising the author's obscurity for its potential ability to "open a path for faith by showing knowledge its limitations" – a crucial element in the philosophy of obscurantism. Obscurantism can also perhaps be considered a unique kind of art form that shows the absurdity of language. In a journal entry, Ludwig Wittgenstein wrote, "Language is a part of our organism and no less complicated than it," and in his complex work *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (1921), the philosopher writes, somewhat ironically and in a similar vein to Nietzsche, "The aim of the book is to set a limit to thought, or rather – not to thought, but to the expression of thoughts: for in order to be able to set a limit to thought, we should have to find both sides of the limit thinkable (i.e., we should have to be able to think what cannot be thought). It will therefore only be in language that the limit can be set, and what lies on the other side of the limit will simply be nonsense" (p.3). One can imagine language as a steady incline along which expressions are uttered, until we reach a point at which expression falls over the edge and becomes nonsensical. It should be remembered that 'nonsense writing' – in Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland* and *Jabberwocky*, and in the works of Franz Kafka, James Joyce and Flann O'Brien, for instance – has proven creative and enjoyable. But in cases where there is no irony, as opposed to being creative the nonsense becomes, as Wittgenstein puts it, *unhelpful*; and there is a very fine line between creative nonsense and obscure monologue that purports to express sense – as Robert Frost articulates, "Forgive me my nonsense, as I also forgive the nonsense of those that think they talk sense" (*The Letters of Robert Frost*, Volume 1, p.325). We could say that obscurity and nonsense must be for the sake of obscurity and nonsense rather than for the sake of explanation. Or, philosophy must employ language clearly, since it is about communication and explanation, although the language of literature may be used more freely and creatively.

### Creative Obscurity

There is an evident difference between intellectual obscurity and obscure creativity. One can be linguistically creative without resorting to obscurity, or can indeed be obscure in such a way as to be humorous or compelling. Many authors, from Vladimir Nabokov to Roland Barthes, have produced prose that is at once accessible and creative, and whose obscurity can be considered an art form. Experimenting with language in supposedly obscure ways can make literature-as-art (rather than literature-as-communication) emerge victorious. For instance, we witness Nabokov's lyrical prowess throughout *Lolita* (1955), beginning with the slightly unsettling and enigmatic opening sentence, "Lo-lee-ta: the tip of the tongue taking a trip of three steps down the palate to tap, at three, on the teeth." The mastery of such enigmatic sentences is that they often evade the analytical grasp of philosophy or other academia instead becoming art through creative obscurity.



*The Holy Family with a Curtain* by Rembrandt  
Obscurantism can indeed be an effective manoeuvre, provoking greater thought-processes and intellectual investigation. This couldn't be illustrated more clearly than in Rembrandt's *The Holy Family with a Curtain* (1646). I am less concerned with the religious meanings of this painting than I am about the curtain itself; a seemingly innocuous, pointless part of the work, and yet it provokes the viewer to wonder what lies behind it. The curtain, blood red and purposefully pulled partly to the side, teases the viewer, offering not even a partial glimpse of what it completely obscures. The Virgin is plainly seen; and there is Joseph, semi-obsured in the background, near the curtain; but whatever is behind the curtain itself is left unanswered. The painting thus features three forms of creative depiction: the Virgin's clear visibility, Joseph's semi-obsured form, and the curtain itself, a symbol of obscurantism, or rather, of the ability of obscurity to be creative, by emphasising the ambiguity that so often confronts us, which may however be the source of great art, and indeed philosophy. For the greatest philosophies are aware of their own limits – aware of when they cannot answer the questions their philosophers ask. As Wittgenstein stated, language must be beset by certain limits.

So obscurity in language can be seen as not always self-defeating, but, ironically, as sometimes illuminating. Moreover, if language were a purely functional tool for communication, we would cease to have literature as we understand it. If all curtains in all art were pulled completely aside to expose what lies behind them, then the need for imagination would deteriorate. This also explains why good writers are those who not only have a masterful grasp of language, but who also know how to pull it apart and put it back together in different ways. To an extent, literature is masquerade, something to be deciphered. There is indeed an art to the unsolvable enigma.

### The Obscurity Industry

However, as the science fiction writer Orson Scott Card remarked, "a great many writers and critics have based their entire careers on the premise that anything that the general public can understand without mediation is worthless drivel" (*Ender's Game*, Introduction, p.xix, 1991). In particular the academic industry, which thrives on difficult thinking, and is built on values of linguistic and

intellectual exclusivity, has as a result become insulated, to the extent that many intellectuals reserves their complex speech acts for their peers. Many scholarly journals request that papers should have no 'jargon-laden language', yet these journals still invariably circulate primarily amongst academics. The papers are then cited by other academics in their own papers, leading to the intellectual recycling circle. What good ideas there certainly are in academia, are more often than not reserved for a crowd of academic insiders whose interests lie with an appearance of intellectualism rather than a desire to extend knowledge to others outside of this circle. Many aspects of academia are like an Orwellian conspiracy that operates with its own brand of Newspeak. I have seen presentations at academic conferences which use more straightforward language disregarded in favour of those that use purposefully obscure language. This is indicative of a culture that depends on intellectual reputation. As Terrance Macmullan astutely observed in *The Daily Show and Philosophy* (ed. Jason Holt, 2009):

"Most intellectuals simply don't bother trying to engage the public. This started in large part with the radicalisation of American universities in the 1960s, which led many intellectuals to write off non-intellectuals as dupes, and many non-intellectuals to dismiss academia as a hotbed of leftist propaganda... The isolation of intellectuals became more extreme when they started emulating European theorists, such as Jacques Derrida, who used extremely dense and jargon-laden language. Perhaps academics speak mostly to each other because they think other academics are the only people who can keep up with them intellectually. I suspect, however, that this isolation is largely self-imposed, for the sake of convenience, since it's much easier and more comfortable to speak to someone who shares your assumptions and uses your terms than someone who might challenge your assumptions in unexpected ways or ask you to explain what you mean" (p.61).

Academia seems unable to produce an adequate cultural mediator. Often we have to choose between the obscure theories of a philosopher talking only to academics, or their severely commercialised counterparts in Oprah and Bono etc, preaching to the world a message that risks being distorted and trivialised. But we have come to rely on celebrities to bring certain issues to the world's attention, since the academics, with all their intelligence and innovative ideas, simply do not involve the public in their debates, at least in an efficient manner. It seems to be assumed by swathes of academics that the most complex writing is the most intellectual, but the very concept of communication defies this assumption: successful communication is based on mutual understanding between sender and receiver. But certain writers and academics have interpreted the struggle for clarity as a chore that will potentially make their work dull and uninteresting. And regardless of whether or not listeners, readers and critics actually understand the complex arguments and prose, it is certain that many are too intellectually diffident or plious to challenge the obscure ideas they are listening to or reading, believing that if they can't understand it then it must be beyond their intellectual capacity, and thus of great philosophical value. Yet often all that is being witnessed is pontification masquerading as knowledge and innovation.

Although many students I know swear they love her work, and that they understand her theories, the notoriously complex theorist Judith Butler is an example of obscurantism. As David Gauntlett writes, Butler's "prose is unnecessarily dense and long-winded, and almost never fails to use jargon even where much more accessible vocabulary is available. Some people defend this saying that academics should be allowed to develop complex terminology to express their sophisticated ideas... However, although Butler's writing is like an explosion in a dictionary factory, if one takes the time to dig through the rubble, one finds that her ideas are actually quite straightforward." (*Media, Gender and Identity*, p.146, 2002).

### Language's 'Golden Mean(ing)'

Often it has been said that language is the instrument of philosophy, but it may be more accurate to say that language is the burden of philosophy. Somewhere in the history of philosophy the poor writing style of certain clever philosophers was falsely interpreted by aspiring philosophers as implying a need to be purposefully obscure. So they were.

This shift in communication has operated in the only way Western society understands: through extremes. We replace one ideology or trend with its extreme opposite. In place of anorexia, we have obesity, and vice versa. We've also developed an inadequate system of communication determined by what Aristotle called vices of excess and deficiency. This tendency towards harmful extremes is only remedied by finding what Aristotle called the 'golden mean' between excess and deficiency. But writers often fail to find this golden mean between creativity and obscurity, instead adhering to either excessive complexity or empty simplicity. This culture of extremes believes that 'involving the public' must automatically mean allowing people to communicate incessantly in a constant streaming of voices with no critique as to the quality of ideas involved.

To combat both exclusion and over-inclusion, then, we should be encouraging the proliferation of ideas in public without opening the floodgates of incessant shallow opinion. As Deleuze and Guattari noted in their book *What is Philosophy?* (1994), "we do not lack communication. On the contrary, we have too much of it. We lack creation. We lack resistance to the present. The creation of concepts in itself calls for a future form, for a new earth and people that do not yet exist" (p.108). Yet such desires to accommodate both communication and restraint lead to criteria of taste or class that do not easily allow more intriguing, contradictory figures to emerge: the popular-culture philosopher, the charismatic intellectual, and the Nobel Laureate as a *Playboy* centrefold. Because we live in a culture of extremes, we cannot abide those whose tastes conflate ideas seen to be incompatible: popularity and intellectualism, critical interrogation and low-brow art, wisdom and foolishness – the kinds of contradictions perhaps epitomised in the philosophy of Slavoj Žižek, whose work seems to reconcile the feud between complexity and 'obscene' popular culture. Yet he is, lamentably, one of only few.

I recently overheard a student mistaking 'Rhodes Scholars' for 'rogue scholars', but I thought the mistake fortunate, since it made me think that rather than searching for and recruiting Rhodes Scholars, we should be perhaps searching for Rogue Scholars whose use of language is not reserved for certain groups and lecture theatres. Lecture theatres are spaces of performance; but a performance for the same audience every week; and so they are in reality, spaces of institutionalisation, for education has become more about uniformity and replication than creativity and experimentation. Yet great thinking and writing relies on rogue experimentation.

In academia an excess of language is deemed reputable and sophisticated, while a deficiency of language – the illiterate, the mute, or the nonsensical babbler – is dismissed. Academic language lacks the substantial influence of an Aristotelian 'golden mean'. Yet there is as big a difference between obscure language (mis)communicating good ideas and good language communicating obscure ideas as there is between demolishing language and using language to demolish.

From <[https://philosophynow.org/issues/104/Obscurantism\\_and\\_The\\_Language\\_of\\_Excess](https://philosophynow.org/issues/104/Obscurantism_and_The_Language_of_Excess)>

